

# ONE HUNDRED YEARS IN THE NEW WORLD

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*THE STORY OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH  
FROM 1857 TO 1957: ITS ORIGIN, GROWTH, AND INSTITUTIONAL  
ACTIVITIES; TOGETHER WITH  
AN ACCOUNT OF THE CELEBRATION OF ITS ANNIVERSARY  
IN ITS CENTENNIAL YEAR*

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ISSUED  
BY THE PUBLICATION SECTION  
OF THE CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

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CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE  
OF THE  
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH  
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN



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# Foreword

THE PRINTED PAGE is the memory of yesterday recorded, the privileges of today noted, and the challenge of tomorrow stated. Supplemented by photographs it makes our forebears live with us. Pictures of their primitive buildings become symbols of the faith of a people toiling for God and food in a new land. The Centennial Committee feels privileged to publish this *Memorial Book* to have our denomination remember and share by means of the printed page God's favors in the past. Since history is to the present what memory is to the individual, the committee trusts that the members of our churches, in perusing this book, will gain from its record of conflicts and blessings a stronger assurance of the promise: "I will build my Church."

By means of this book our spiritual fathers will speak to us. We shall notice their weaknesses and strength, but as true children we shall seek to capture their secret power that has been given to us as a sacred legacy: their loyalty to the Word of God in Christ Jesus our common Lord. This loyalty is scarcely to be distinguished from the sense of mission that dignified their entire life and gave them stamina to face the problems of soil, cabin, church, education, and benevolence.

God's grace triumphed over their sins and weaknesses as it must over ours today. The symbol of that triumph is the remarkable expansion of our Church unanticipated by its very founders. This book records the many facets of our church life today: its work in education, benevolence, youth organizations, missions, radio, and religious press. All these activities, recorded in the book, reveal the dimensions of our denomination in action.

A principle of selectivity of church photographs had to be employed since the inclusion of pictures of all of our churches naturally would be impossible. The reader will soon discover that the churches included represent different areas of our church orbit, and particularly the various stages of our architectural history. These photographs were selected from the files of our denominational Publication Committee.

When our fathers set foot upon American soil our nation was much taken up with the new inventions and newer means of transportation which then seemed to them staggering. We are facing a new century which is making man master of the regions beyond the orbits of this world. We cannot foresee what form the Church of tomorrow will take, especially since our Church presently is engaged in ecumenical conversations with other churches closely akin to us in the truth. The Holy Spirit alone knows the Church of tomorrow. Whatever new the next hundred years may produce, or whatever form the Church of tomorrow may take in submission to the Word of God through the Holy Spirit, may this book serve a new generation, like the pillar of stones along the Jordan stream, as a monument to the goodness of God, and to the faith and fortitude of those who trusted in him and were not put to shame.

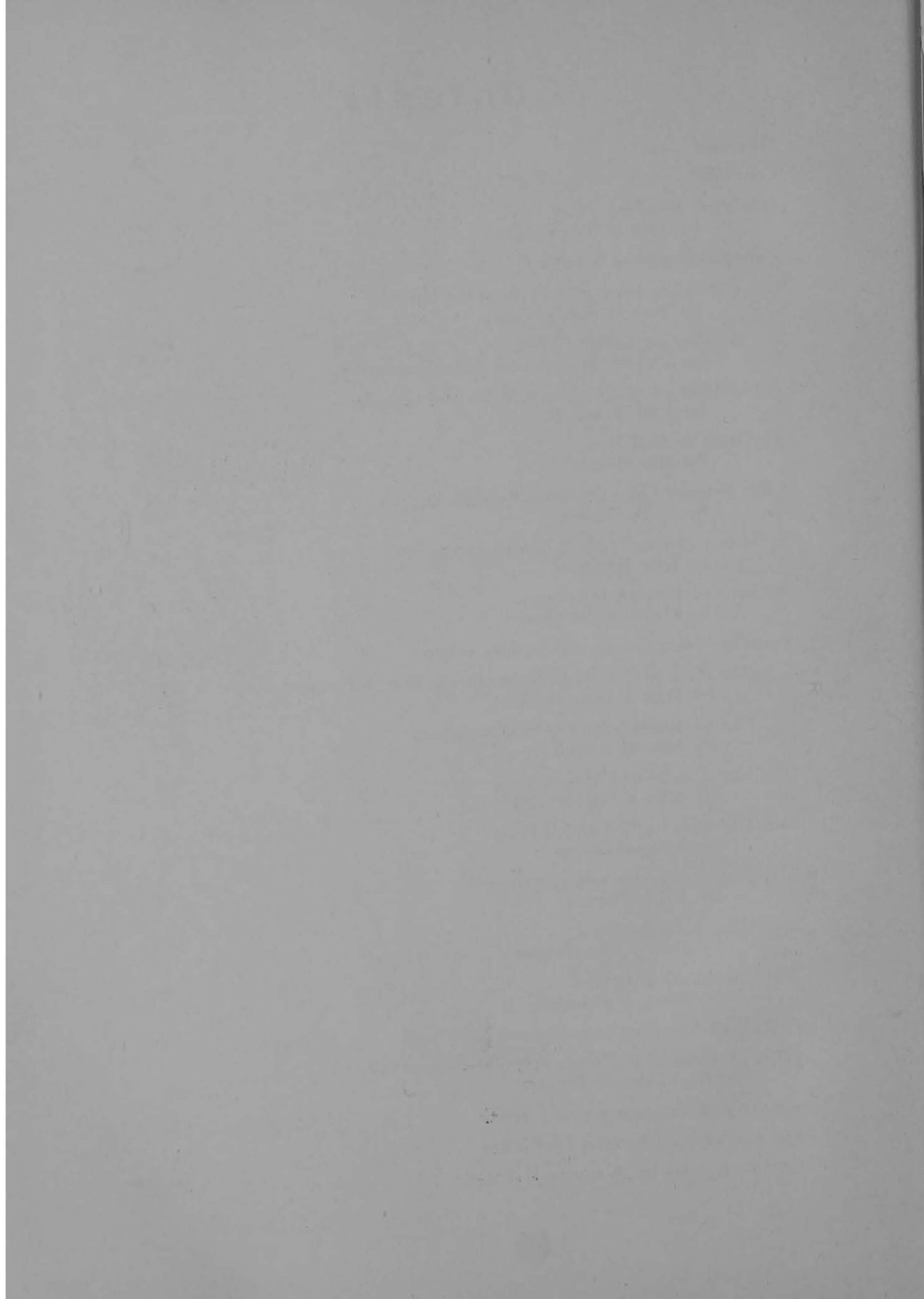
We express our sincere appreciation to all the contributors. We thank the Rev. Henry J. Kuiper, editor of this volume, for his excellent services; Messrs. Peter de Visser and Webb Van Dyke for design and production of this volume; and Casey Wondergem, Jr., the Centennial Manager, for his unstinted assistance.

JACOB T. HOOGSTRA,  
Chairman of the Centennial  
Publication Committee



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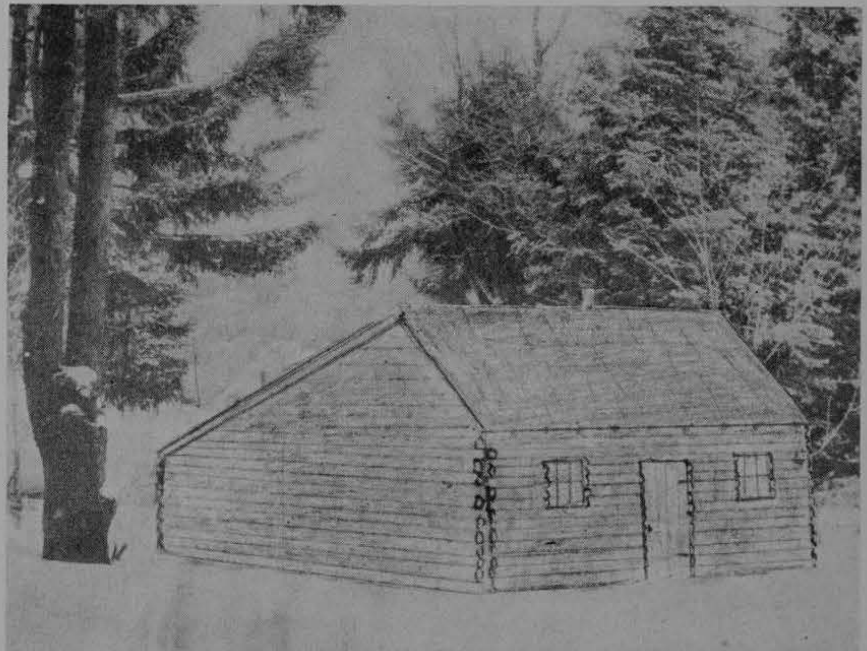


# OUR FIRST HUNDRED YEARS



*The pictures of the churches shown in this historical section (pages 9 to 66) include only a small percentage of our churches. Obviously, it would be impossible to picture all of them, and so those included here were selected on the basis of historical interest, architectural distinction, typical character as rural or city churches, and regional representation. As such the pictures included here give a panoramic view of the denomination and its churches, large and small, old and new, urban and rural, in the United States and Canada. No doubt there are scores of others that would be equally interesting, but only a limited number could be used from those available in the denominational publication committee's files.*

*First structure of the Christian Reformed Church of Graafschap, Michigan.*



## Our First Hundred Years

By J. H. KROMMINGA, President of Calvin Seminary

**T**HIS is the story of many people — not a family, not a race, not a nation, but a Church. They are many, and yet they are one. In the course of one hundred years, many members of this Church have died; yet there is an abiding unity between all of them and the youngest and newest of this Church's members today. These people are found in many places — cities, villages, and farms — and these places are thousands of miles away from each other. They are from many walks of life: artisans, merchants, housewives, soldiers. Yet they are one in their faith, one in their hope, one in their love.

These many people, who are one Church, lift up their thoughts in gratitude to God. For their Church has now passed its one hundredth birthday. Because it is God who has given growth, prosperity, peace, and strength, they turn to him to give thanks for his undeserved favor. And because God distributes his talents in the rightful expectation that they shall be put to use for him, these people turn to him also in confession.

Looking back on one hundred years of history, looking upward to him who has been wonderfully gracious, and looking about them on the great darkness in which the world lies, they say, "God's favor is our challenge." This is the story of that Christian Reformed Church and her reasons for speaking of favor and challenge.

### The Faith That Molds Us

What is this Christian Reformed Church of which we speak? To some people — many

of them right here in our own country — it is nothing at all, because they have never heard of it. To others it is a mere name which they have heard once or twice, but in which they are not at all interested. To many others it is many things. It is a group of die-hard conservatives, who are mentally living in the seventeenth century; it is a narrow-minded strait-laced community of

*The first building of the First Christian Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, located on Williams Street.*

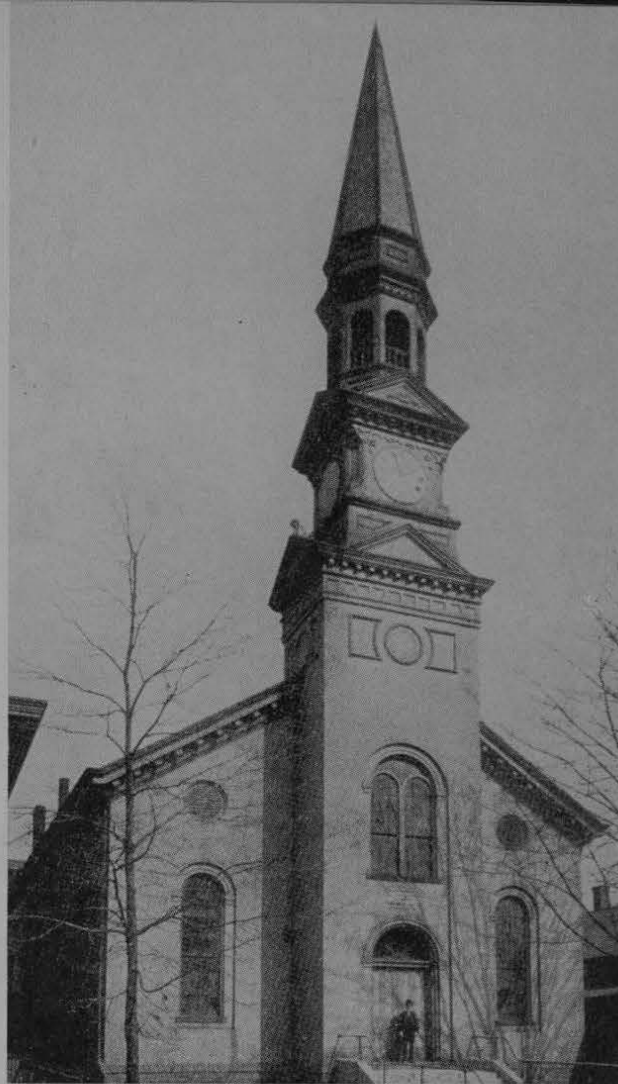


people who don't know how to have fun; or, on the opposite side of the ledger, this Church is a pillar of orthodoxy, a group that knows how to get things done, the envy of other believers who are not so well organized and not so well indoctrinated.



*First church building of Drenthe, Michigan built in 1848.*

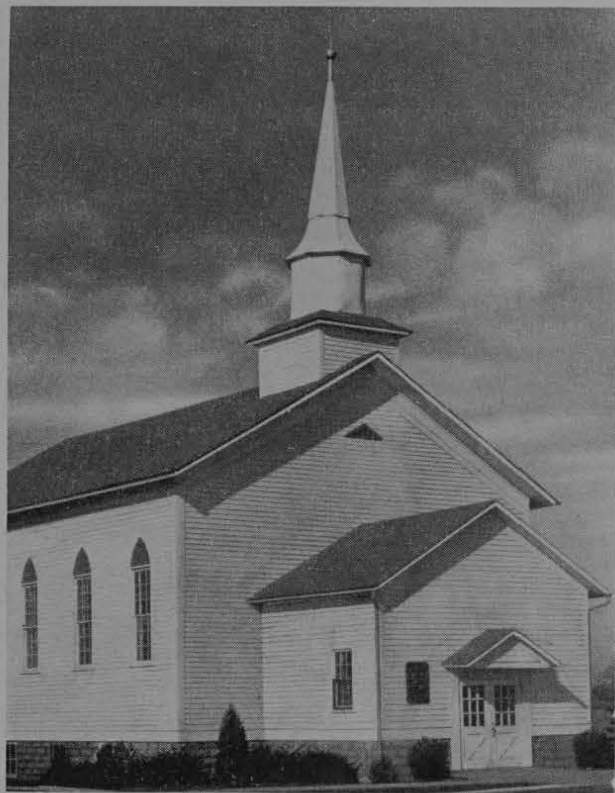
*Below — The first building of the Hughes Street Church, Cincinnati, Ohio, was used until 1890.*



*The second building of the First Church in Grand Rapids was located on Spring Street (now Commerce Avenue).*

*Below — Old Church at Lafayette, Indiana.*





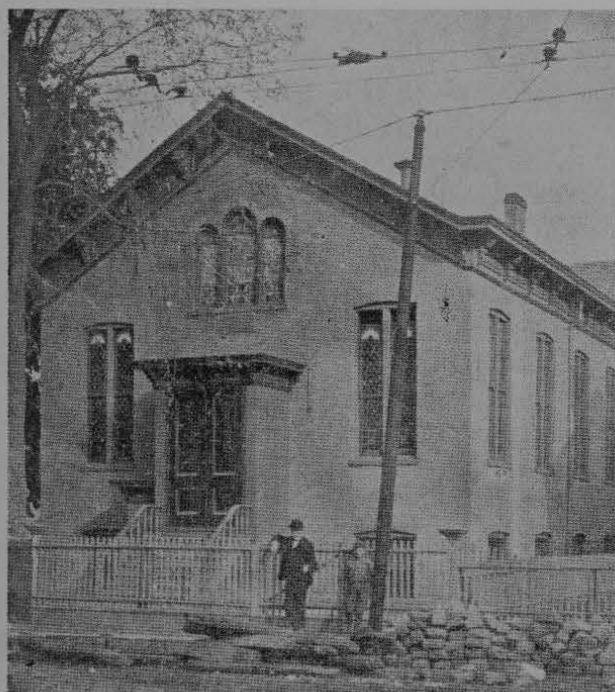
*Old Church, Noordeloos, Michigan.*

But all of this leaves the question very much unanswered. What is the Christian Reformed Church? What do *we* say of her — we who stand among her members and interpret her from a sympathetic standpoint? We say she is a group of people — *our* people; she is a cluster of congregations; she is a church order, a collection of customs and habits, a well-circumscribed way of life. But all this we say without really answering the question.

We come much closer to the truth when we call her mother. In the case of most of us, it is she who has given us birth into the people of God. It is she at whose breast we have received spiritual nourishment. It is this Church which has instructed us, guided us, and when necessary chastised us — but always in genuine affection and tender concern. This is the name which we give the Christian Reformed Church — the name mother. And this is the pulse-beat that throbs in us who write and who read, who preach and who listen, who teach and who learn.

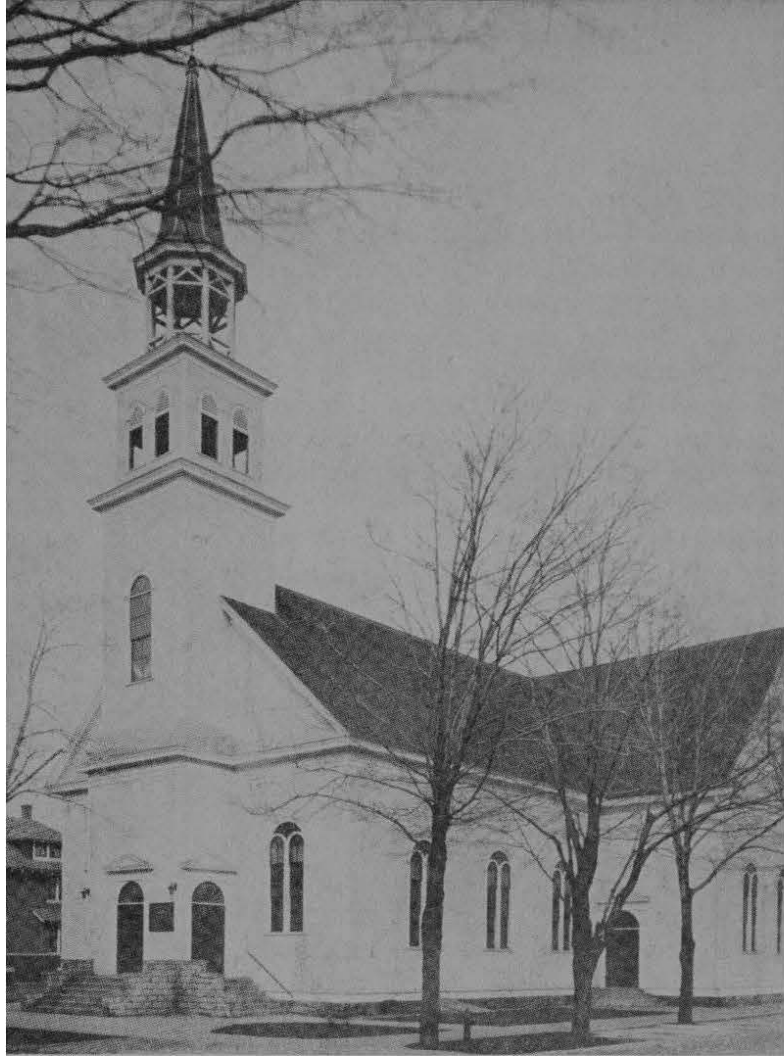
But somehow even this remains unsatisfying. Is it no more than an accident that we

*Old structure of First Paterson Church, New Jersey.*

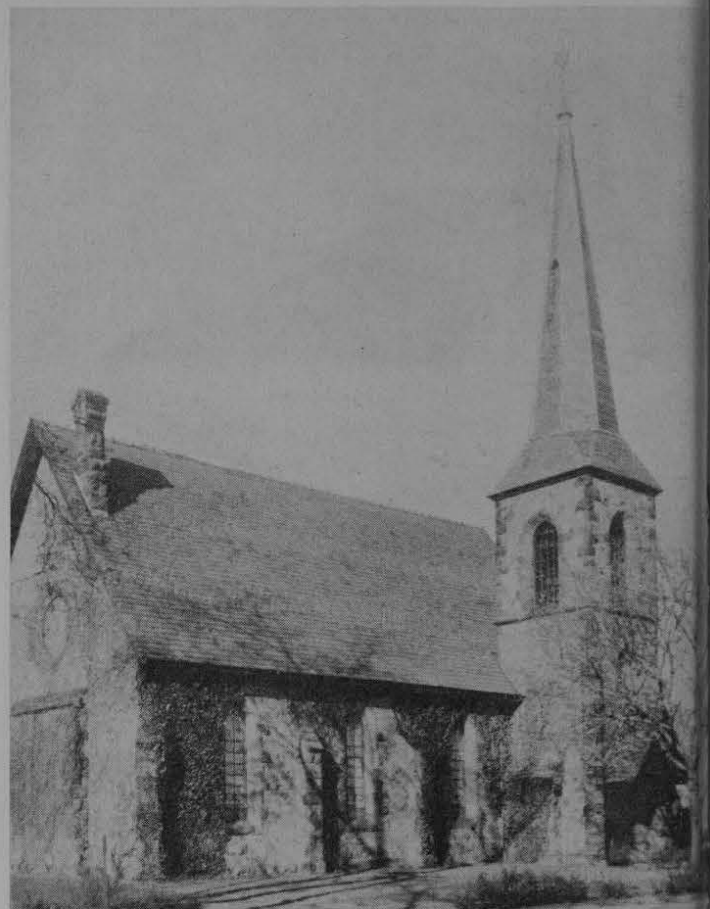


*Old church of First Pella, Iowa.*



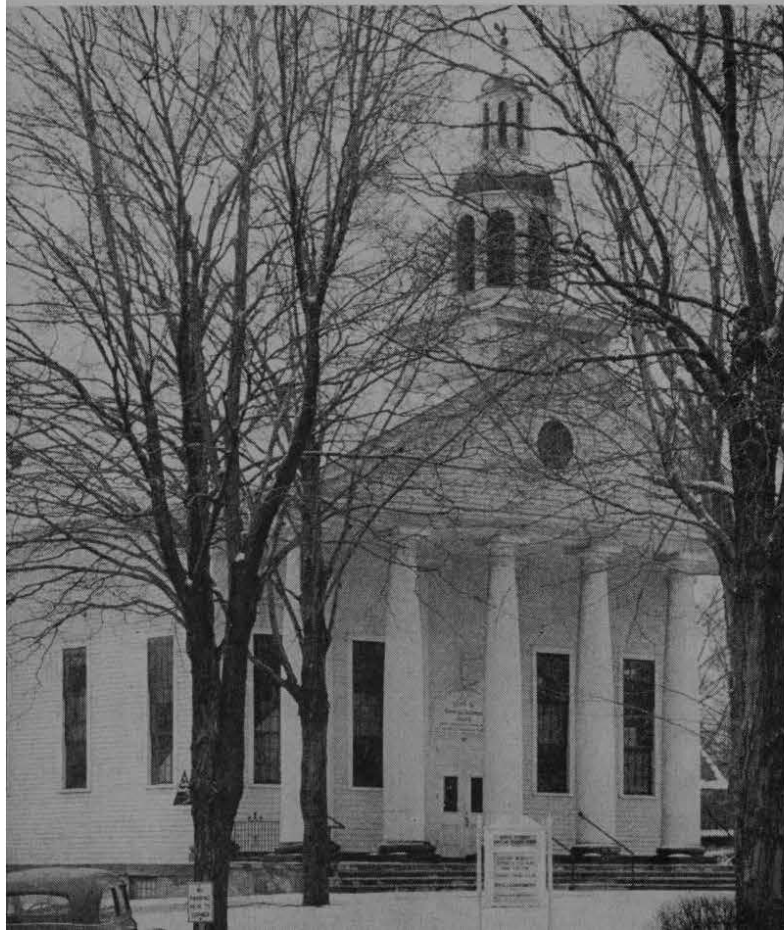


*Imposing old Central Church, Holland, Michigan.*



*Old sanctuary of Englewood Church, New Jersey.*

*Stately Ninth Street Church, Holland, Michigan.*



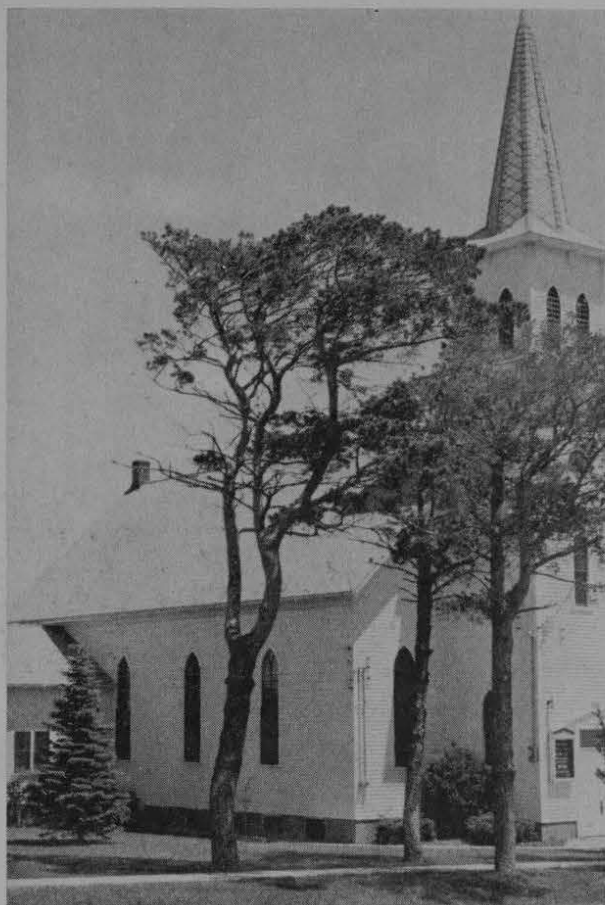
call this Church mother? We who have been hers from youth, what is it that makes us happy to claim her when we have come to years of discernment? Not size, not wealth, not the perfection of all of our fellow members — certainly not these things. What is this Church, then, and what is her appeal to us?

The best answer we can give to this question is that she is a faith come to life, a doctrine made flesh in her members. This is really what she is. This is what gives her the stability and greatness which she possesses — which she possesses not so much because of us as in spite of us and because of God.

And what is this faith? It is not something that was born yesterday, or even one hundred years ago. Nor is it anything which had its first rise in the minds of men. It is the faith once for all delivered unto the



*Old Fourteenth Street Church, Chicago.*



*Church of First Wellsburg, Iowa.*

saints, through holy men who spoke from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit. It is the faith which is enshrined in the Bible, that Word through which Christ calls his Church into being.

It is that Bible-based faith as it has been molded by the thinking and the living of the Christian Church throughout the ages. Augustine had it, when he said, "Thou hast made us for thyself, and our souls are restless until they rest in thee." Polycarp, an ancient martyr, had this faith when he was threatened with death if he did not deny Christ. He said, "Eighty-six years have I served Christ; and I have experienced nothing but love and mercy from him; how can I deny him now?"

This is the faith which was framed centuries ago in the oldest of the Christian creeds:

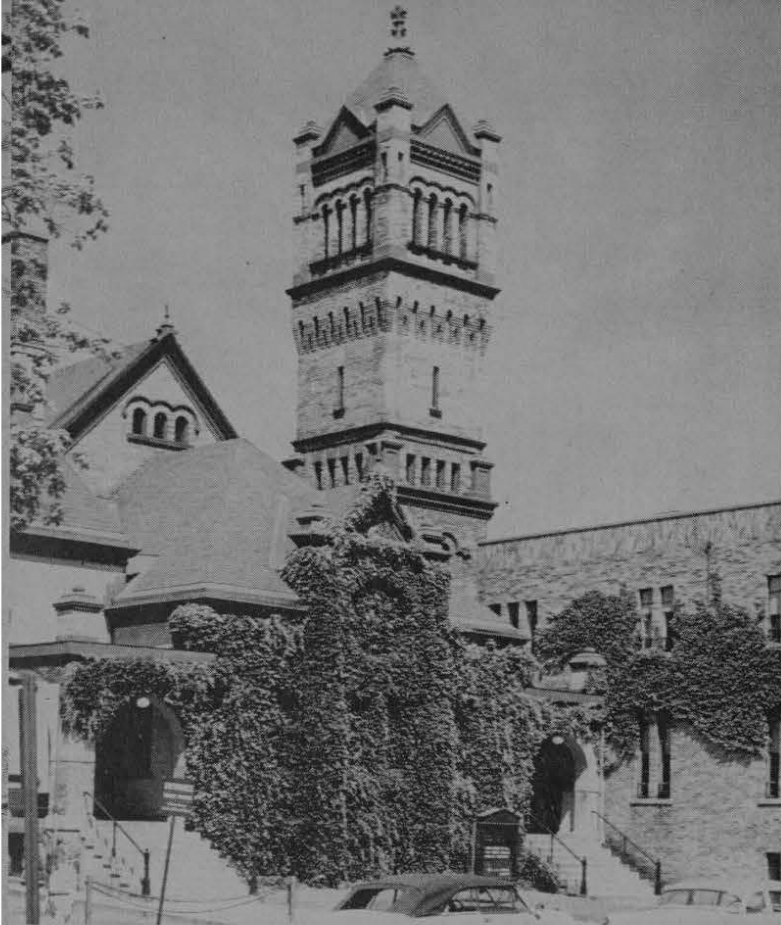
I believe in God, the Father, Almighty,  
Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ,

His only-begotten Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary . . .

This creed is confessed every Sunday in the Christian Reformed churches which dot the land. And every word of it is believed and sincerely meant!

When the Christian Reformed Church faces anew the ageless question, "What think ye of the Christ? Whose Son is He?" — the Church can draw again on an ancient symbol to which she subscribes without reservation. She says with Athanasius and the other saints of Nicea:

. . . And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made. Who for us men and our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate . . .



*LaGrave Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan.*

This is a faith which was once buried under the rubbish of centuries of human error. But it was resurrected again at the time of the Protestant Reformation, by a renewed appeal to the Word of God. Out of that Reformation age came a new set of statements of this faith, designed to meet new problems which had arisen. These are the creeds by which the Christian Reformed Church is more particularly known.

These three statements of faith — the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort — are not cold, lifeless documents, but warm with the lifeblood of those who were willing to lay down their lives for their faith. They are not superimposed upon Scripture, but they are drawn from Scripture and witness to the faith of the Church in Scripture in specific and unmistakable words. They are not "Dutch" creeds, but belong to the Church Universal. One of them was written in Holland, but the other two came from Belgium and Germany; and the labors that went into them

came from Englishmen, Scotchmen, Poles, and French, as well as others.

It is this faith, thus formulated, that "makes" the Christian Reformed Church. It is a heritage bestowed on her by God. It is a large part of what is meant when the members of that Church say that whatever is good about their Church is God's gift. We are not bigger and better than that faith; the faith is bigger and better than we. It is a heritage that we do not have to raise to greatness. It lifts us up to a higher standard of greatness than we could otherwise attain.

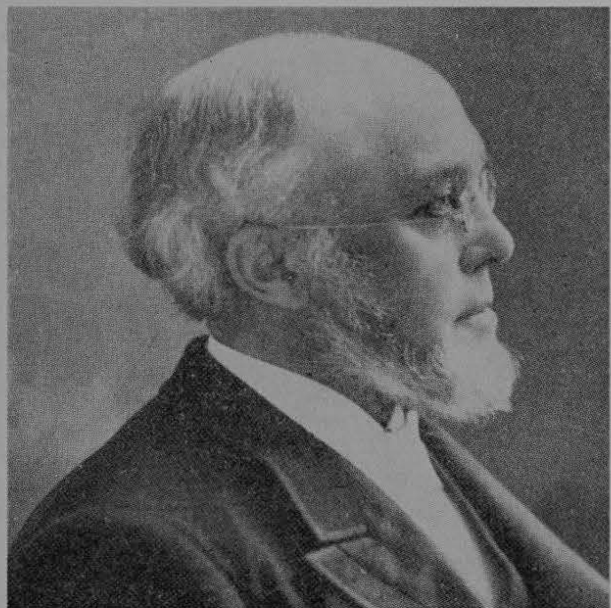
Such a faith, of course, is not the possession of a narrow few. In a certain sense and up to a certain point this faith is shared by everyone who is called Christian. But throughout the history of the Christian Church there has been renewed definition of that faith in the face of error, so that within the circle of those who were somehow in the Christian heritage a distinction was made between the truly Christian and those falsely so called.

Many times new statements of doctrine have been necessary to mark this distinction. But in our day it is done on a new basis. Today the burning question is whether a group really holds to the statements of its faith or not. But in this respect again our heritage is rich. The Christian Reformed Church springs from a loyal band of people who were ready to stand by their formulated faith in the face of tremendous obstacles.

That story was spelled out with great clarity in the Netherlands, a little more than a hundred years ago. The strains and stresses of foreign invasion had worked great hardships on the Reformed Church of the Netherlands. A new monarch of that country, with the best of intentions, sought to strengthen that Church by bringing it under the close control of the monarchy. This royal control of the Church — which was out of keeping with the true character of the Church — was coupled with a spirit of religious freedom, which amounted to doctrinal indifference. Those who were in control were determined that no old-fashioned and narrow creeds were to hamper the Church in her self-expression. Royal control was thus used to force this

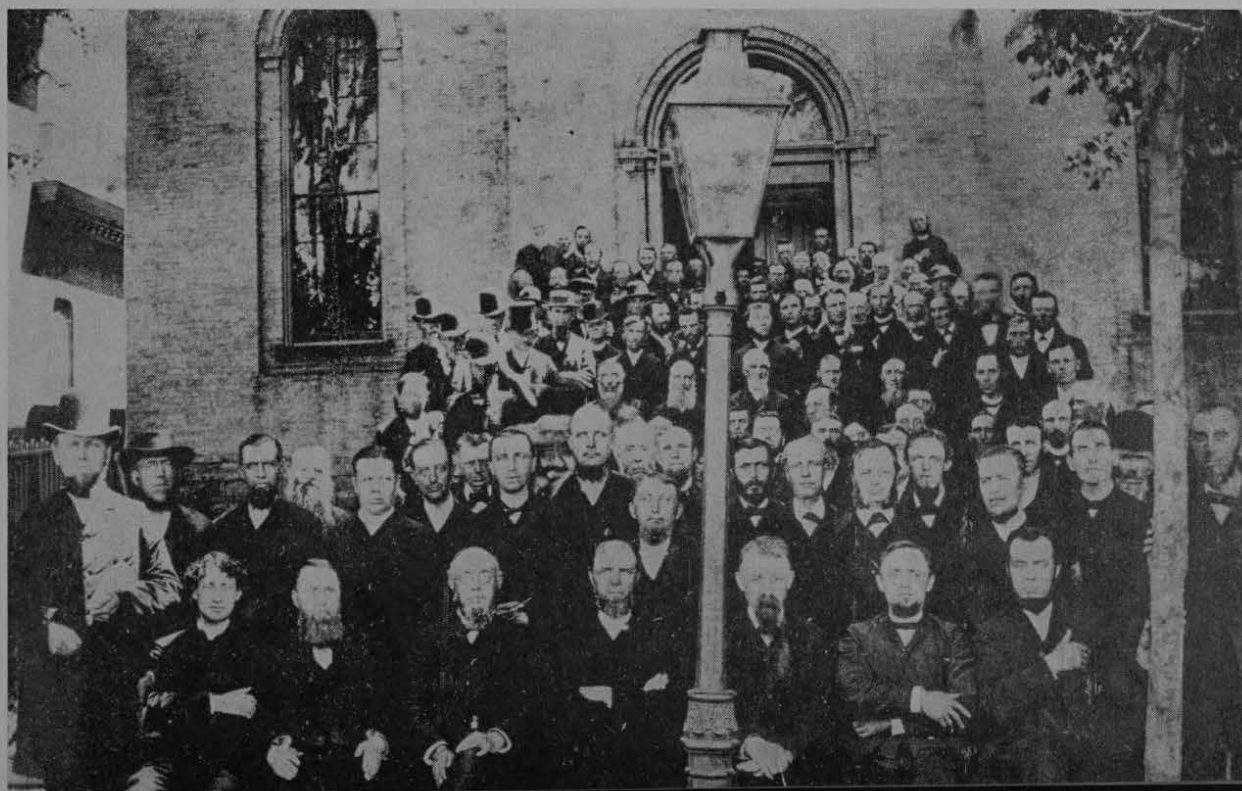


*First seminary graduating class of the Theological school.*



*Prof. G. E. Boer, first seminary professor.*

*Early Synod of the Christian Reformed Church held in Grand Rapids, Michigan.*



attitude down the throats of those who still wanted to hold to the historic creeds of the Church.

This was too much for some loyal hearts to endure. They were convinced that by following such a course of action the Church was denying her own true essence. If this was what the king of the land said, their duty was to follow a higher King than he. And no matter what trouble it might bring them, this was the course of action they would follow.

Thus it happened that, beginning in 1834, a movement was begun which gained the name of the "Afscheiding" or Secession of 1834. Under the leadership of such men as Hendrik De Cock, Hendrik Scholte, and Albertus C. Van Raalte, a Church came into being composed of men and women who were determined to stand by the historic Reformed faith. This was not a Church which was wilfully brought into being by leaders who wanted to have things their own way. These leaders were neither schismatics nor heretics. They did not leave the State Church of their own free will, but were cast out. And their only "heresy" was that they criticized the State Church for denying the faith for which it was supposed to stand.

It was not a large group which formed the Church of the Secession. Nor was it distinguished by a high level of learning and cul-



*Rudyard, Michigan.*



*Prosper, Michigan.*



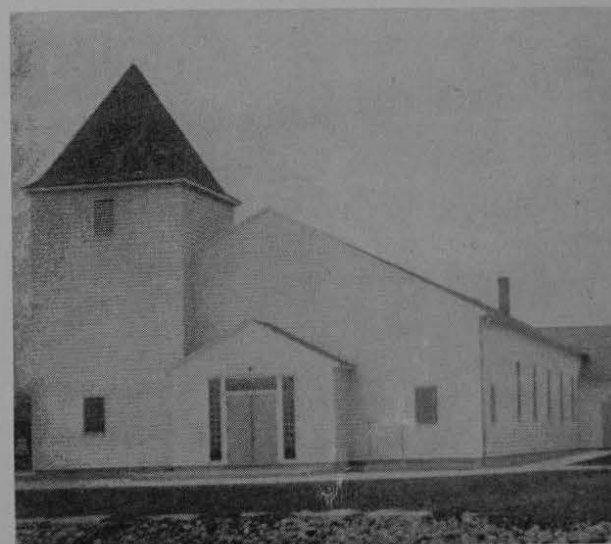
*Woden, Iowa.*

*Birnamwood, Wisconsin.*



*Holland, Iowa.*

*Chandler, Minnesota.*



*In small towns and rural communities, the familiar frame church buildings became symbols of a people's reverence and worship of God.*



*Borculo, Michigan.*

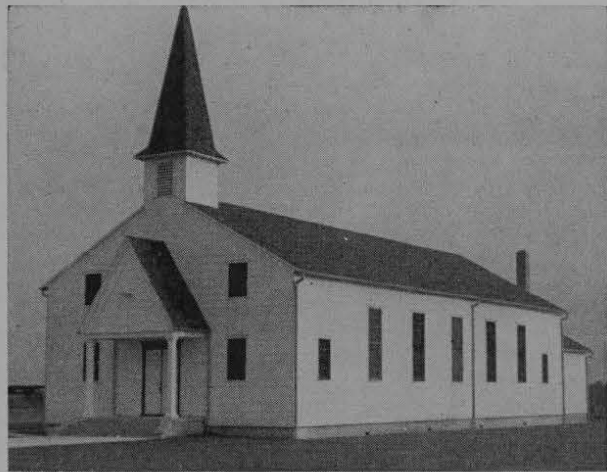


*Plainfield, Michigan.*



*Manhattan, Montana.*

*Grangeville, Idaho.*



*Terra Ceia, North Carolina.*

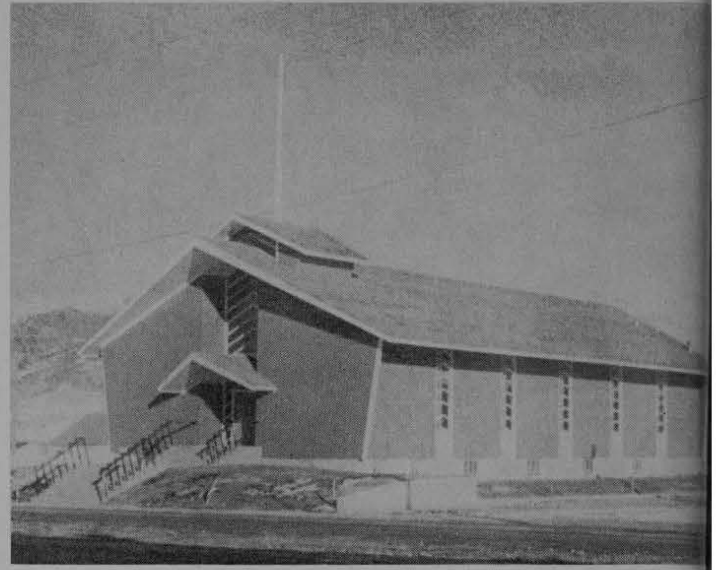
*Oak Harbor, Washington.*



*Across the land, some large, some small, these structures marked the spread of the denomination into many states and provinces.*



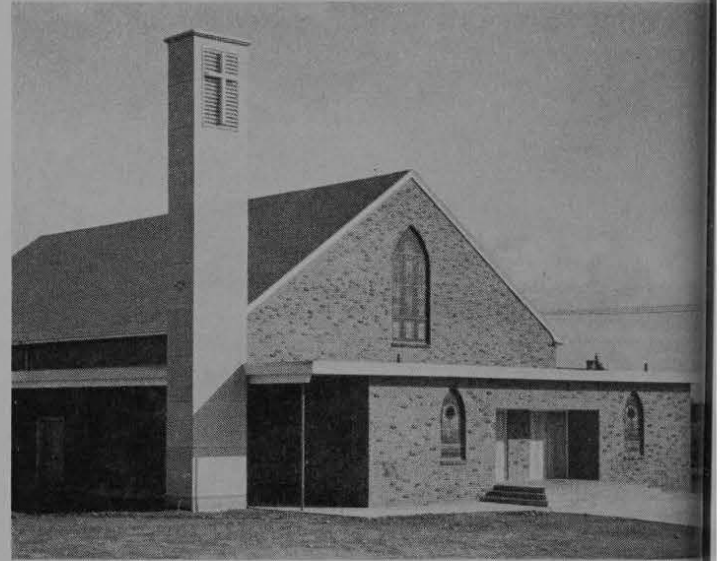
*12th Avenue Church, Jenison, Michigan.*



*Bozeman, Montana.*



*Everson, Washington.*



*Everett, Washington.*

ture among its members. It was certainly not a wealthy Church. But in spite of all this, there was an undeniable greatness about this Church, because its heritage of the faith was great and strong and pure. Not that these members of the new Church were angels. They were quite human. There were differences of opinion among them; and, sad to say, these led to divisions in the little group. But there was in them a basic single commitment to the truth revealed from God. For this they must be honored. The only thing

that might still be wished for them is that this unity had come to clearer and more consistent expression.

Those who formed the Church of the Afscheiding were despised by those whom they had left behind in the State Church. Both in an official and an unofficial way this spite was visited upon the heads of the seceders. The name Seceder ("Afgescheiden") became a dreaded name, a term of reproach, to be flung as a taunt at them as they walked the streets of the towns. Official measures

also were taken against them. Troops were quartered in their homes, as if to prevent violence; but often they themselves engaged in violence. The Seceders were forbidden to hold worship services. They were fined; and when they were unable to pay the fines, their goods were sold at auctions. Some of the very leaders of the Secession, upright and honorable men, spent terms in jail. The economic hardship and unemployment which were felt in the Netherlands at the time were felt in a special measure by the Seceders, who found it even more difficult than others did to get jobs. And when a terrible failure of the potato crop came on top of all this in 1846, it was a final blow almost too much to be endured.

Small wonder, then, that some began to think of trying to make a fresh start somewhere else. The leaders of the Seceder group began to make inquiries concerning the possibilities of emigration to some other coun-

try. After Java had been considered and rejected, their thoughts turned to America. Plans were carefully laid for the planting of a colony in the United States. These plans received a tremendous impetus when it was learned that Dr. Albertus C. Van Raalte had decided to join the band of emigrants personally as its leader. Thus was begun the emigration which was to lead to the founding of the Christian Reformed Church in Western Michigan in 1857. We will resume this thread of the story in a little while.

But before we leave it for a time let us reflect that these people were representatives of a grand historic tradition. They were in the mid-stream of the Christian faith as expressed in the best European traditions. They were the heirs of the formulation of that faith which was especially associated with the Netherlands. And they were heirs who appreciated their heritage, and refused to let it slip out of their fingers through participa-

*Immanuel Church, Hudsonville, Michigan.*



*Church at Sheldon, Iowa.*



tion in a passing fad of modern theology. Small in number, in culture, in power, they were heirs of the faith, defenders of the faith, and lovers of the faith. Their story is not, strictly speaking, the story of the Christian Reformed Church. It took place before that Church was born. But we could not understand our Church without that story. The share that we have in the heritage of these people is something for which the Christian Reformed Church, on the occasion of her Centennial, may well thank God.

### **The Land of Our Birth**

What sort of a country was it into which these immigrants came? At the time that the immigration began, the United States of America was about a half century old as an independent nation. The young nation bore the characteristics of youth. There was a boundless self-confidence that she had within herself the powers to achieve her goals. There was a clear sense of a wonderful new destiny, and an impatience with all the older

civilizations and nations which had failed to reach perfection.

This was the new world. The old world, it was felt, was well left behind. There was a strong spirit of a sort of isolationism; America could take care of herself. Democracy was being advanced with the greatest enthusiasm. Equality between men and classes was stressed to the point where everybody was supposed to be pretty much the same as everybody else. The old idea that all men are equal in that all are sinners had little appeal. But now all men were considered equal in an optimistic sense; all had equal potentialities.

This democratic spirit had its effects on religion too. The denominations which were dominant in early American life were more or less Calvinistic; Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Anglicans. But both within and without these denominations the dominant Calvinistic thinking was being replaced by new doctrines, more in keeping with the spirit of independence and optimism which characterized the new country. These ideas

*Church at Hamilton, Michigan.*

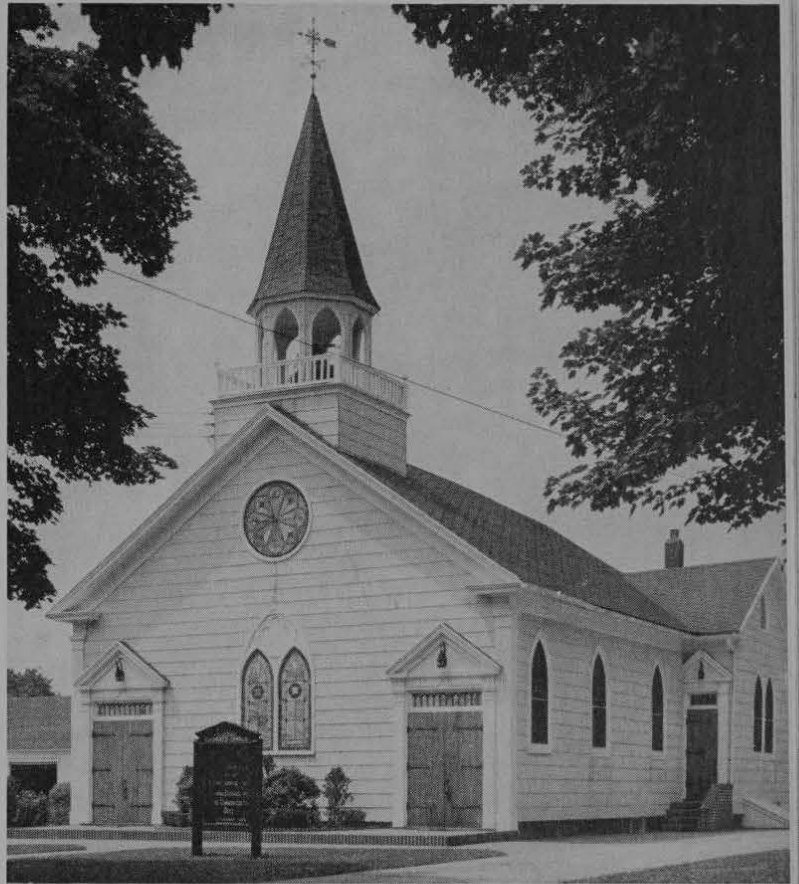


*First Church at Byron Center, Michigan.*



were not original in the United States; the spiritual legacy of the country was not created, but borrowed and adapted. But the adaptation was such that it was almost as if a new religion had been created here. New standards were set up for the success or rightness of a religion. In a country where the greatest progress was in the material sphere, material progress, even in religion, became the goal and criterion. Thus not only was it true that various doctrines were changed; but doctrine itself was relegated to a place of little importance.

Those who settled on the advancing frontier included many new immigrants. The cheap land which was available on the frontiers attracted many who needed all the help they could get to make their start in life. Those who did not speak the English language tended to congregate in close-knit communities. Foreign language and a distinctive faith were powerful forces in keeping a community together. The educational situation helped to contribute to this. The public school was rising to prominence, but



*West Sayville, Long Island, New York.*

*Overisel, Michigan.*



*Munster, Indiana.*





*Second Church at Randolph, Wisconsin.*



*Edgerton, Minnesota.*

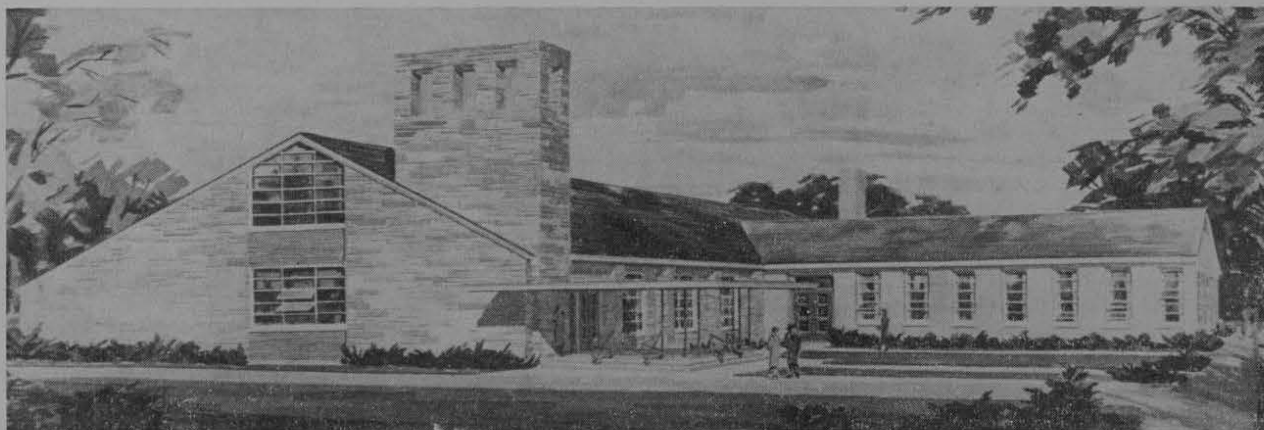


*Le Mars, Iowa.*

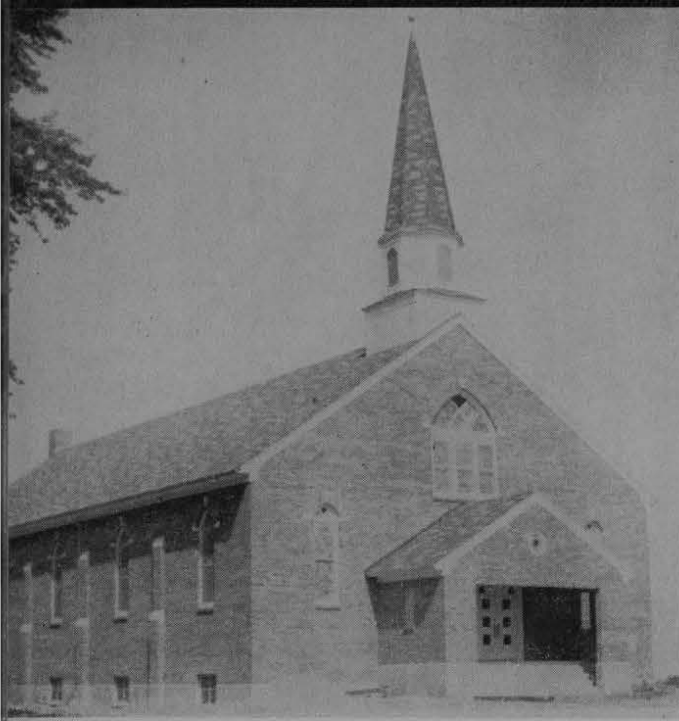


*Fulton, Illinois*

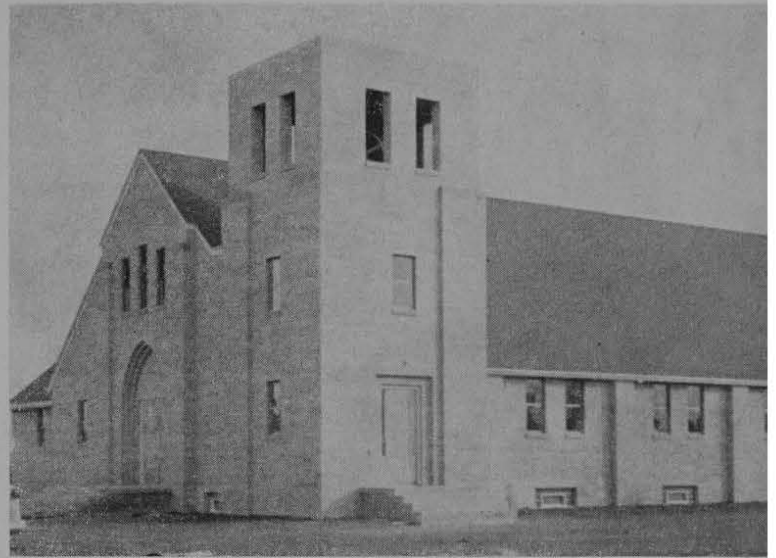
*De Motte, Indiana.*



*As the country grew, and the people prospered in the land God had given them, their houses of worship took on more substantial character and dignified beauty.*



*Oakland, Michigan.*



*Corsica, South Dakota.*

private or religious schools were permitted if they were independently supported. Even instruction in a foreign language was permitted in these schools. In the public schools the reading of the Bible was common, but was gradually declining.

Those who came from the Seceders' Church in the Netherlands conformed to these patterns just as well as anyone else. They followed the frontier, sought cheap land, held together for religious reasons, and set up their own schools, just like the others. They figured in the tremendous expansion of the United States, by which the population of that country was doubled between 1830 and 1850. The population of the Mississippi Valley rose from four million to ten million during these years. The handful of Dutchmen who came to Iowa and Michigan was thus no more than a drop in the bucket.

As the years rolled along toward the birthdate of the Christian Reformed Church the flood tide of the westward movement was reached. Rail connections between New York and the East on the one hand and Chicago and the Mississippi River on the other were completed early in the 'fifties. Immigration to the United States was at a high level. 1854 was a peak year, with 450,000 immigrants entering the new country. Chicago trebled its population between 1850 and

1860. California was booming by 1860. The Mormons were setting up their desert empire in what is now Utah. Such was the growth of the country, principally through immigration, that the population increased from 23 million to 31½ million in the decade between 1850 and 1860.

Immigration on such a scale was becoming a national problem. By 1860, Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Louis had more immigrants than native-born among their population. In Michigan, one-fifth of the total in 1860 were foreign-born. Some of the immigrants were more readily welcomed than others. The Germans were generally well received. The Dutch, because of their thrift and stability, shared this welcome. The Irish, for instance, were not welcomed with equal favor. Immigration filled a labor need in the vast new country, but some were alarmed at the size of the stream. Some anti-immigrant groups, such as the Know-Nothing Party, arose during this time.

The situation in the rapidly expanding country was ripe for crusades of various kinds. Prohibition of the sale of intoxicating liquors was attempted by nearly all of the northern states. Feminism was rapidly advancing. There was a craze for secret religious orders, which led somewhat later to the rise of organized opposition. The newly-



*New church at  
Drenthe, Michigan.*

arrived Dutchmen soon found themselves confronted with the question what to do with lodge members. In later years, the Christian Reformed Church became the principal support of an anti-lodge organization, the National Christian Association.

There were rapid developments in religion. 1857 was a year of financial panic. This gave rise to one of the waves of religious revivals which have recurred periodically in American church history. These "Post-Panic Repentances" were characterized in general by prayer meetings, self-searching, and sober religion. Churches grew rapidly in the Midwest, with many new sects making their appearance. Some of these were transplanted from the old world. Some were schisms from established bodies. Still others were highly imaginative new inventions.

While the general setting is of interest to us as the world into which our forefathers came, we are especially interested in the religious and theological climate of the United States. The newcomers to America were interested in this, too, and gave serious

thought to the possible effects which it might have on the Reformed faith which they loved. Some came forward with dire predictions that the Reformed faith could not flourish, nor even last very long, in this country. It is not always possible to know just what these prophets had in mind when they made their predictions. But there certainly were some elements in the situation which did not promise an easy time for the orthodox faith. We must mention some of them briefly, because they are very much a part of the situation into which the Christian Reformed Church was born.

In the old country, the members of the Seceders' Church had come out of the State Church — the Church which represented the majority of the population. Even after they had formed their own denomination, and even though their numbers were comparatively small, they still represented the Reformed faith and the Reformed way of life. Their thinking on religious matters was somewhat in line with the thinking of the majority of the population.

But in the new country, the immigrants were less than the dust in the balances. Not only were they very few in numbers compared to the rapidly expanding population of the country, but they were but one among a vast number of denominations. English and Scotch and German and Scandinavian religious traditions, as well as many others, had been transplanted to the United States. It was inevitable that there should be some competition among these denominations. But there was also a strong tendency to find some measure of agreement among them; to find that on which all stood together. Thus while many denominations were formed, it was not easy to maintain theological distinctiveness. The theological climate of the new country threatened to make theology something of second-rate importance, and doctrine something to be largely ignored.

The demands of frontier life vastly strengthened this tendency. Coming from the older cultures of Europe, or from the older settlements of the East, the men and women of the frontier faced an entirely new kind of life. The former cultural advantages were gone; gone also was the time to engage in cultural activities. There was no time for anything but "labor in the cold," to subdue the wilderness in which they had been placed and wrest a living from it. This, too, had its influence upon theology. It seemed far less important to maintain theological distinctiveness than to get together and encourage one another in the face of great difficulties. The frontier lent a new perspective to religious questions.

The challenges presented by the frontier had some good effects also. They stimulated the settlers to raise up educational institutions. The need of this came to light first in connection with the supply of ministers. The growing new churches could not fill their needs with candidates educated in Europe or in the older schools of the East. If the frontier churches were to be supplied with ministers, frontier schools had to be erected. In community after community, denomination after denomination, schools were set up on the frontier. After a while they began gradually to broaden their offerings, so that

not only ministers, but future doctors and teachers as well, could get their preliminary education in the denominational college. Thus the religious and social atmosphere of the frontier prepared the way for many such colleges and seminaries as our own Calvin College and Seminary.

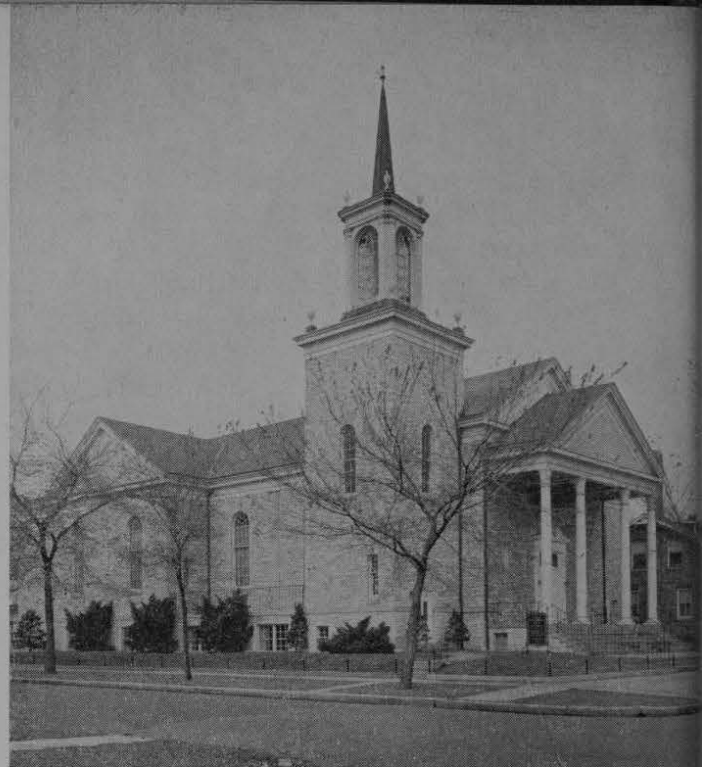
Missionary spirit was also stimulated, to such an extent that it was almost impossible to be on the frontier and not be interested in missions. The settlers on the frontier were in frequent contact with the Indians. How natural that those who had religious interests should be concerned for the eternal welfare of these original inhabitants of the land. And the new settlements themselves needed mission work: "church extension" work among those who had moved from other communities, and "evangelization" work among those who had never been members of a Christian church or who had forsaken their membership when they moved to the West. But such was the stimulus given to mission work that the frontier settlers were soon turning their

*Lafayette, Indiana.*



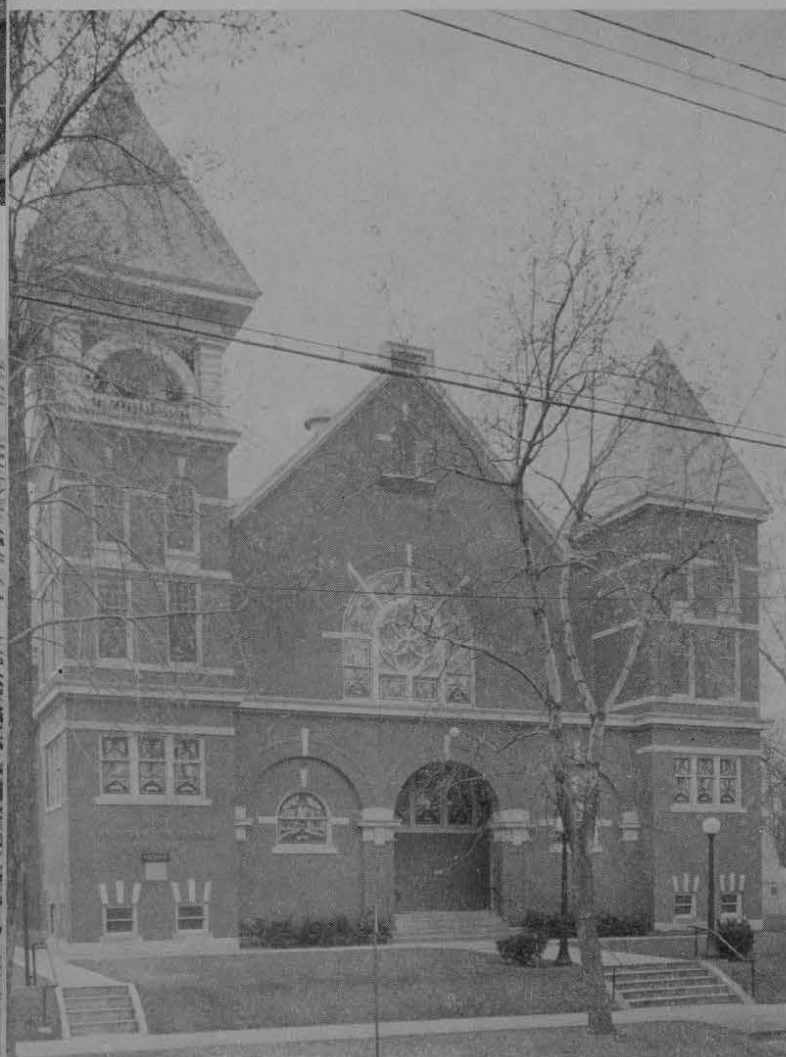
eyes overseas, to plan mission work among the heathen throughout the world. Before the end of the century the United States was contributing more men and more money to the foreign mission effort than any other country in the world. This had a good effect on the churches which were part of that country.

But in all of this it was not the conservative old-world denomination that fared best. An Arminian type of gospel seemed best suited to the frontier, spurring men on to ever greater efforts to achieve their goals in time and in eternity. The minister who best fit the situation seemed to be, not the highly trained professional man, but the rough and ready



*Ebenezer Church, Berwyn, Illinois.*

*First (Bates Street) Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan.*



circuit rider, or the man who labored in the fields six days in the week and then mounted the pulpit on Sunday. In communities where regular religious services were not to be had, men and women came to depend on the occasional revival services or the annual camp meeting to get their religion in large doses.

Among the things that suffered most in this changing religious atmosphere were the historic creeds of the Church. In religion as well as in politics and economics there was a great impatience with that which came from the old world. This new country was the place of the fresh start. The mistakes and shortcomings of the old world were going to be bypassed. Some therefore repudiated the old creeds. Others modified them. Appeal was made directly to the Bible for the support of new ideas; and the most common attitude of all to the creeds came to be to ignore them. The appeal directly to Scripture, good though it may sound, actually meant that the most widely differing ideas could find some sort of support in Scripture. The interpretations which the Christian Church had historically given were ignored. Casting loose the anchor of the Christian creeds, the churches found themselves adrift.

Many other elements of the theological



*Alpine Avenue Church,  
Grand Rapids.*

atmosphere could be mentioned. But these will have to suffice to illustrate how the new world promised to affect the new immigrant Church. In some respects the Church was stimulated; in other respects it was threatened. In almost every respect it was challenged to hold fast its heritage and yet make itself effective in the new situation.

Thus we may understand with what mixed feelings the immigrants came to the new country. What would it mean for the faith which they held dear? Was that faith to have a new opportunity, a renewed freedom, new growth and development? Or was it to be lost on the vast sea of American life? Who can blame them for asking these questions, when even today, after more than a hundred years, the answer is visible only to the eye of faith?

### **The Old Faith in the New World**

The lot of the immigrant is usually hard. His travel is not the kind that one seeks for its own sake. His pilgrimage is hard and unpleasant work, at a great price in personal discomfort and danger, which men and women undertake only for the sake of the great improvement which they hope to find at the end of the journey.

Those who left Holland for America in

1846 were no exceptions to this rule. Their difficulties began even before they left their native land. Not only were accommodations hard to get, and expensive for these poor people, but they had to endure personal abuse besides. The story is told of one captain who was hailed by the captain of an incoming vessel, as he set sail with a boat-load of immigrants. The incoming captain wanted to know what cargo he had on board. His reply to the question was, "False coin; I have counterfeit coin on board, which is no longer good in the Netherlands."

On board the pitifully inadequate sailing vessels the people were herded together like cattle. So unsanitary were the conditions that it was small wonder that epidemics of sickness frequently broke out, and many travellers died and were buried at sea. Particularly heavy was the death toll among the children.

In all of this, however, the travellers were sustained by several things. They hoped for a better life in the new world; they received remarkably competent guidance from their leaders; they were given a wonderfully warm welcome by new-found friends in the new land; and they had faith in God. Among the leaders, none was more outstanding than Albertus C. Van Raalte, who had decided to cast in his lot with the sojourners in the new

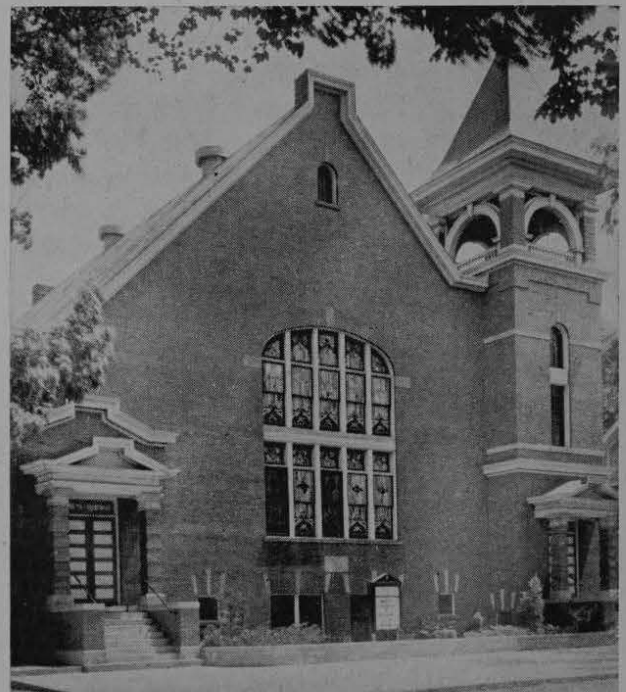


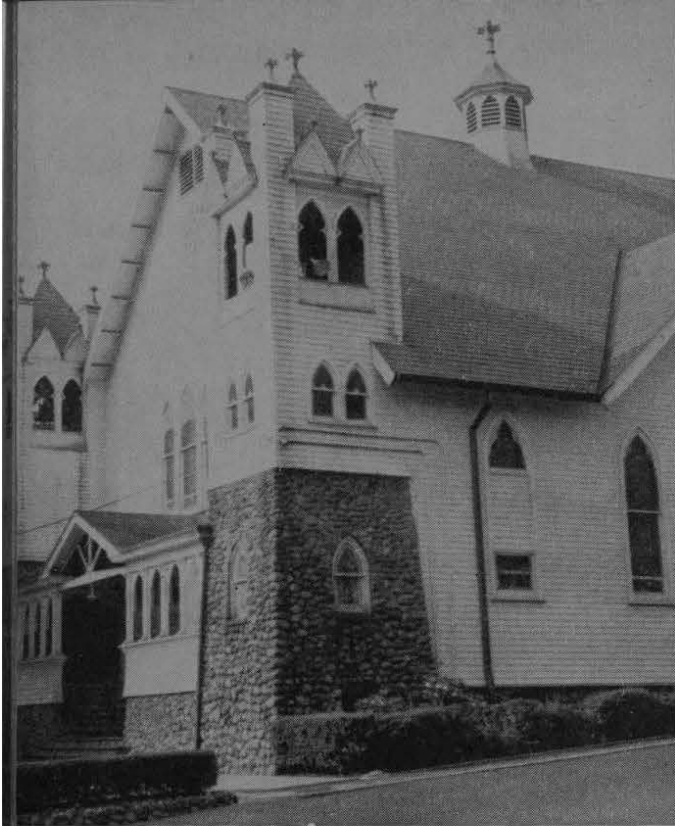
*Church at  
Ridgewood,  
New Jersey.*

*Northside Church, Passaic, New Jersey.*



*First Kalamazoo Church, Michigan.*





*Midland Park Church, New Jersey.*



*Prospect Street Church, Passaic, New Jersey.*

*Fourth Roseland Church, Chicago.*



land, and who became counsellor, judge, and financier to the new group besides being their pastor. In the new country a special welcome was tendered by members of the Reformed Church, and in particular by Rev. Thomas De Witt and Dr. I. N. Wyckoff, two ministers of that church in the State of New York. Others also were of considerable help, including Judge John Kellogg and Mr. Isaac Fairbanks, both in Michigan.

The newcomers could well use the help that was offered to them. The distances were

greater than any they had ever dreamed of in the Netherlands. The woods were thicker, the snow deeper, the problems greater than they had anticipated. Western Michigan was a wilderness at the time — explored, indeed, but not settled. These were strange working conditions for those who had come from the highly cultured and thickly populated Low Countries.

There were those, of course, who grumbled at the hard conditions. They complained at the choice Van Raalte had made in sending them to Western Michigan. And who was to deny that there was cause for grumbling? The conditions were severe enough to tax the faith of any man. The houses were slow to rise; the lake was not suited for harbor purposes because of the sandbar across its mouth; forest animals destroyed the crops; sickness was rampant; and before the colony had stood for many years, a disastrous fire destroyed the fruits of years of labor.

But the settlers had come with a deeper motivation than to attain to an easy life or material gain, and those deeper motives pulled them through. One of the first things they did, after the immediate needs were taken care of, was to form a church organization. Congregations were soon found not only in Holland, but in the surrounding towns. These congregations were gathered into a classis, Classis Holland. This classis began meeting in the Spring of 1848, and three ministers and four consistories were represented at the first session. This first meeting busied itself with questions of regularity of meetings, the term of office of elders and deacons, and a marital problem. It was evident from the start that the settlers meant business as to their religious affairs. They proceeded without delay to organize an ecclesiastical assembly, for the regulation and cooperation of the various churches.

Before long, they had opportunity for a wider fellowship. The Rev. I. N. Wyckoff, who had already proved himself to be a friend in need to the immigrants as they passed through the East, came and visited the colony in 1849. He detected among the colonists a longing for a broader ecclesiastical fellowship, and invited them to affiliate with

*Church at Grosse Point, Detroit, Michigan.*



*Burton Heights  
Church,  
Grand Rapids.*



the Reformed Church in America. He realized also, however, that they were afraid of being dominated by others, and so he promised them that if the ecclesiastical connection should prove to threaten their interests, they were free to depart and be by themselves.

To many of the colonists and to their leaders this invitation looked very good indeed. Such was the reception that by 1850 the union was accomplished, and Classis Holland was part of the Reformed Church in America. Most of the original settlers never left this union. But some of them did, seven years later; and with that action the birth of the Christian Reformed Church is bound up.

Two desires motivated the settlers in Western Michigan: the desire to be free from the

ecclesiastical domination experienced in the old land, and the desire to have fellowship in the wilderness of the new. Especially to some who came after the first settlement was made, it appeared that the first of these desires was being sacrificed for the sake of the second. The criticisms were advanced especially by Gysbert Haan, although he was not alone in making them. The message that he brought was that the Church which the immigrants had joined was not a sound Church. He reported disturbing things concerning the practices which he had observed in the Eastern states — practices which touched very directly on the doctrinal position of the Church. He found a hearing among some of the settlers, who began to

*Lee Street  
Church,  
Grand Rapids.*



feel that they had not done a wise thing in uniting with another denomination.

This was the background for the presentation of four documents of secession to the Classis meeting of April 8, 1857. These documents were submitted by two ministers, K. Van den Bosch and H. G. Kleyn, and two consistories, Graafschap and Polkton. These documents, which detailed several reasons for separating from the Reformed Church, were, with some expressions of regret, received as information and filed by the classis.

The reasons given for secession included the charge of open communion, the use of a large collection of hymns, the neglect of catechism preaching, and the accusation that some were no longer convinced that the secession in the Netherlands had been justified. Perhaps these do not seem like weighty considerations. But they were though, with some reason, to point to serious laxity with respect to the Reformed Confessions and Church Order. The Seceders felt that they were again being drawn into a fellowship like that which had proved intolerable in the Netherlands.

Already in January, 1857, some immigrants had organized an independent church. This congregation soon banded together with the other seceding churches into a classis. This classis, which met for the first time late in April, 1857, was the first general assembly of the Christian Reformed Church. It was not until two years later that the name, "Dutch Reformed Church" (*Hollandsche Gereformeerde Kerk*) was chosen, and after another two years that was changed to "True Dutch Reformed Church." But despite these and other changes in name, this is the same denomination which today is known as the Christian Reformed Church.

Not very promising beginnings — these beginnings of the Christian Reformed Church. They were beginnings amid the stresses of the wilderness. It would be hard to claim that all the issues were seen with crystal clarity or weighed with calm judgment. The Church which had its beginning here was characterized neither by great wealth nor by high culture, neither by theological brilliance nor by large and imposing numbers. And yet, in all of this the situation was far



*Second Church  
at Lynden,  
Washington.*

from hopeless, and better things were soon to come. A sound doctrinal position inherited from the fathers took the place of individual brilliance. The numbers of members were soon swelled by a tide of emigration from the Netherlands. A spirit of sacrificial giving made up amply for the lack of wealthy members. God showed to this little group a favor which, though they did not merit it, has not forsaken them throughout the years.

### **From Acorn to Oak**

The seed that was planted in 1857 has enjoyed a healthy growth until today it is a substantial tree. Just how small the seed was cannot be said today with strict accuracy, but reliable estimates place the size of the new denomination at about 750 souls, 250 of whom were communicant members. This is about the size of a medium-sized Christian Reformed congregation today. As noted above, there were at first two ministers, Rev. K. Van den Bosch and Rev. H. G. Kleyn, but the latter returned to the Reformed Church within a year. From that point on, Rev. Koene Van den Bosch was the only minister in the

denomination until 1863. It is not hard to understand that he was a very busy man, trying to satisfy the needs of the outlying congregations as well as those of his own.

At first the members of the Christian Reformed Church were located almost exclusively in Western Michigan. Within a few years scattered congregations elsewhere in the East and the Midwest joined the group. Almost all of the members of these congregations were people who had recently emigrated from the Netherlands. For many years, in fact, this remained the chief source of growth of the Christian Reformed Church.

Something of this growth by immigration was present from the very first. By 1875, when the Christian Reformed Church was eighteen years old, its total membership had risen to slightly more than eight thousand. Soon after that, two things occurred which made the growth much more rapid. First, the new group began to attract more favorable attention in the Netherlands, so that more of the immigration was channeled in its direction. Second, the years from 1880 to the end of the century were years of large-

*Des Moines, Iowa.*



*Kenosha, Wisconsin.*



scale immigration. Thus in the twenty-five years between 1875 and 1900 the size of the denomination grew from 8,065 souls to 53,794. By the time the Christian Reformed Church was a half-century old, in 1907, it totalled 66,112 souls.

From the beginning of the First World War to the end of the Second World War, immigration did not play a large part in the growth of the Church. But a second great wave of immigration set in after World War II, this time to Canada rather than to the United States. Up to that time, the Christian Reformed Church was not really an international Church, although a few scattered congregations were to be found in Canada. But

from 1947 on, the number of members and congregations in Canada increased rapidly. In 1947 there was not one Canadian classis; today there are six in Canada, out of a total of twenty-eight in the entire denomination. Between 1947 and 1956 the total membership of the Church has increased from 134,000 to 204,000, and much of this increase has been in Canada.

An earnest effort was made from an early date to hold immigrant newcomers together in Christian Reformed congregations. In 1879 the first home missionary, the Rev. T. M. Van den Bosch, was appointed to minister to the scattered immigrant believers. When the great immigration to Canada got under

way in recent years, the denomination rallied to the effort to provide locations, jobs, ministers, and church buildings for those who were flooding into the new world. Renewed immigration has been one of the most significant things to happen to the Christian Reformed Church in the past decade.

There were other sources of growth also, but none to be compared to this. A union was effected with Classis Hackensack of the True Protestant Reformed Dutch Church in 1890. A few years earlier, several congregations, with their ministers, left the Reformed Church in America in a dispute over the lodge question, and affiliated with the Christian Reformed Church. As the years went by, more and more attention was devoted to winning converts among those American neighbors who were not of Dutch background. And the natural growth of families, of course, accounted for part of the rising membership totals.

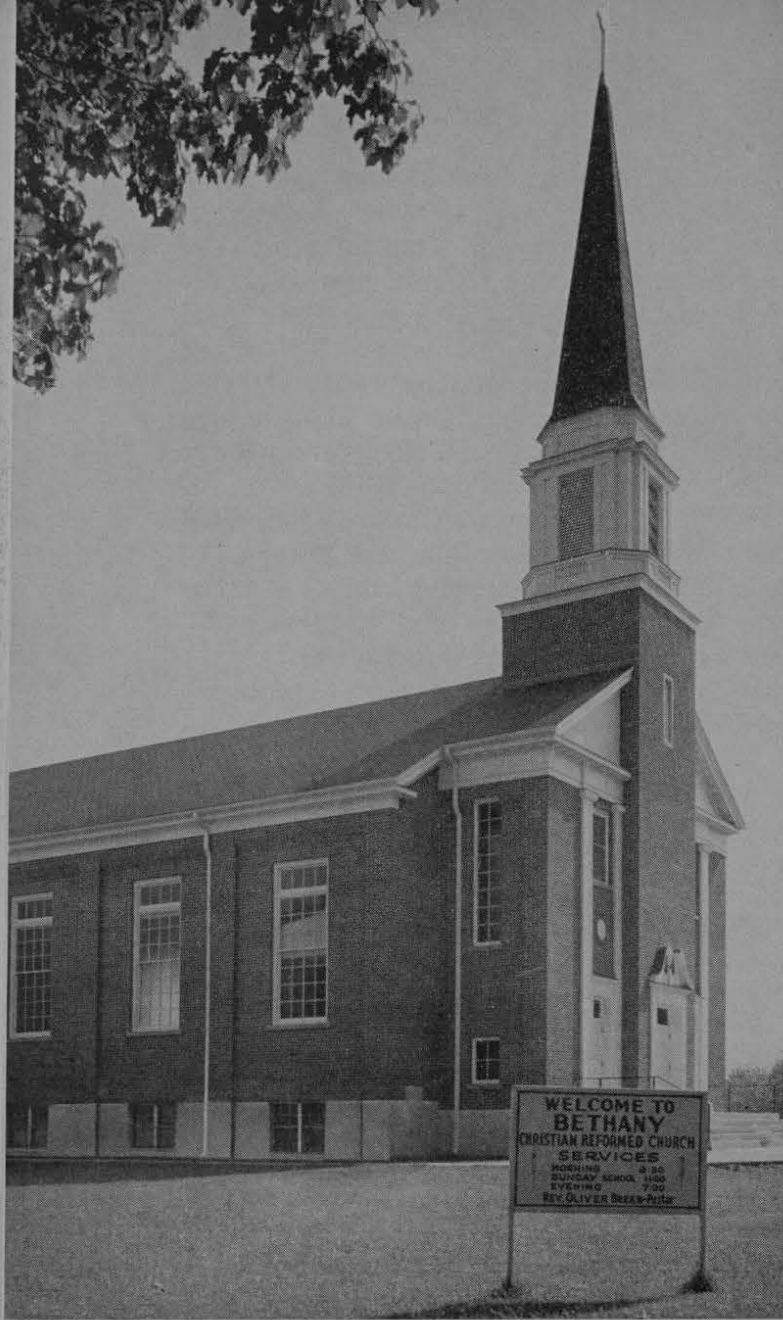
From the time of its birth, the Christian Reformed Church grew with the country in which it was born. As one frontier after another opened up, the new immigrants fol-

lowed the frontier line, seeking the cheap land which they needed to establish themselves in the new world. Thus the geographical progress of the Church was generally from east to west, and later from the United States to Canada. Christian Reformed churches or mission stations are now located in 25 states plus the District of Columbia and Alaska, and in eight Canadian provinces. The area least touched upon is the southeastern United States, where Christian Reformed congregations are few and far between. In many of these states none at all are to be found.

As is to be expected, growth has brought some growing pains. Of the various problems which it poses, none is more general and more persistent than the problem of unity. When only a few people are banded together, it is not unnatural that they are one in spirit and purpose. But when that number swells to nearly a quarter-million, the unity is not so lightly to be taken for granted. Likewise, a group closely located in one section of one state has many interests in common, even beyond those which are purely religious. But



*Westwood Church,  
Kalamazoo, Michigan.*



*Bethany Church,  
Holland, Michigan.*

the eastern and western sections of the denomination are now separated by three thousand miles; its members are found in communities and states ranging from old to new, from crowded city to lonely country; from heavily concentrated Christian Reformed neighborhoods to isolated small groups. And, to add to it all, the recent developments in Canada have added an international boundary and a distinct national culture to the problems of Christian Reformed unity. They have also renewed the old problem of the relation between old settler and new immigrant.

In spite of all this, the Christian Reformed Church is not falling apart at the seams. She is one in hope, one in faith, one in doctrine. She is one also in her program of action in the world. There is a deep unity which underlies all the differences; a common commitment to the Word of God and the Reformed Confessions.

And yet there are problems. As we grow in numbers and cover more territory, we tend not to know each other as intimately as we once did. We must therefore renew and improve our contacts so that we may know, and constantly be reminded of, that unity which truly exists. We see life through different perspectives. Having a common conception of our faith and the need of applying it to life, we differ, sometimes sharply, in the manner of application. As we grow in numbers and in territory, therefore, we shall have to learn to grow in spirit also; to come to that maturity which distinguishes between that which is essential and that which is non-essential; between the faith itself and the form in which it is expressed or applied. This task is not completed. In fact, as long as the Church continues to live and to grow, this work also must go on.

There are other problems, too, which come with growth and geographical spread. One of them is occasioned by the shift in the center and distribution of the denomination. The area of Western Michigan is no longer as dominant over the rest of the Church as once it was. Various outlying areas are becoming numerically strong by themselves. They tend to feel that their own interests are more to be considered than they have been. One of the spheres in which this is most clearly noticeable is the sphere of education. Certainly their claims are not to be despised. They ought to be carefully considered. Vested interests, of course, may not have the last word in church affairs. But neither may sectionalism. And thus it comes

about that in the very year of the centennial celebration there is a study committee to investigate the educational policies and problems of the Church.

There is another problem, however, which is even deeper. Although it is not identical with the problem of growth, we may approach it through this avenue. It is one of the most pressing spiritual problems which the Church has; perhaps the most pressing of all. The blessings of growth which God gives carry new responsibilities with them. Increasing in size, this formerly tiny denomination is making a name for itself in the church life of the new world. But now what shall be its message to that world? And how shall that message be phrased? How welcome shall the citizens of the new world be made in the membership of the church? These are not questions which were created by growth; but the increasing size of the Church makes them more urgent than ever before.

This is especially true because the Chris-

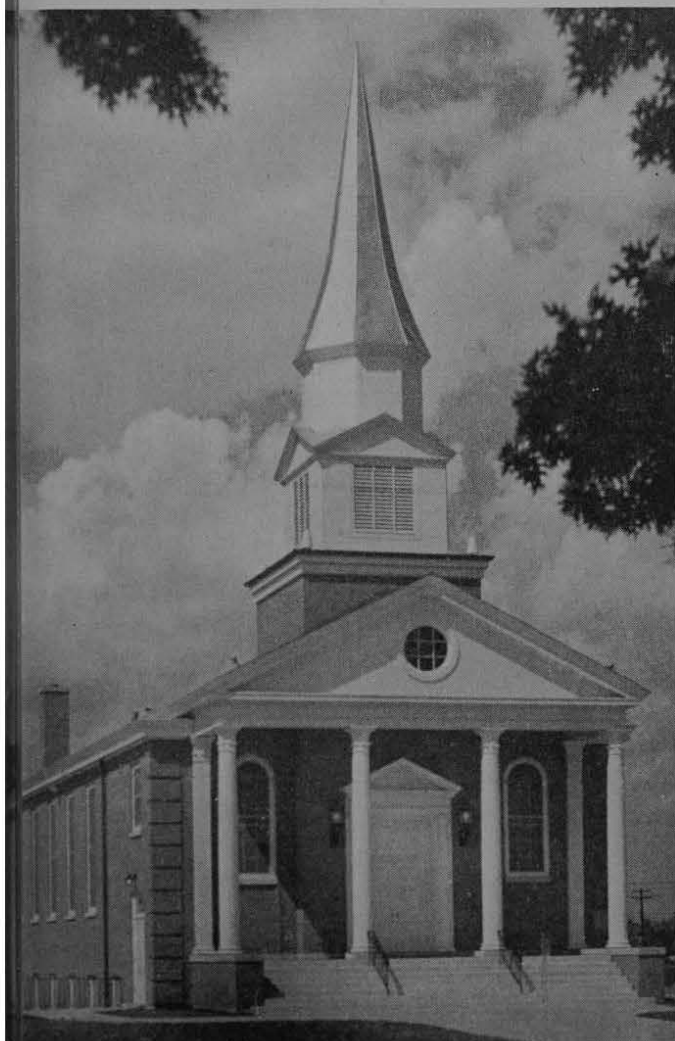
tian Reformed Church has spread geographically. Its members have been scattered like embers over a wide area of the North American continent. Every one of those new localities presents its own opportunities for genuine evangelism. What efforts have been and are being put forth to meet these opportunities are the subject of another part of this book. We simply note here that growth in membership and geographical spread are not mere dead facts or dull statistics. Every new locality brings new opportunities. Every new member is a new potential worker. And every new opportunity, every new worker, means added responsibilities in the sight of the Lord of the Harvest. These are things to remember in our centennial year.

### Keeping the Faith

If it please God to give her more years of service, it must be said that the Christian Reformed Church has not yet finished her course. But in the midst of her years, has she kept the faith? What has a century done to that faith which we described earlier as the heritage of this Church?

Let it be said first, in answer to this question, that we honor the Word of God. We do so, today as well as at any time in the past; considering that Word to be the final authority to which we can appeal in matters of faith and practice. We are in dead earnest about this matter. When in the 1920's and again in the 1930's questions arose about the instruction given by certain teachers, the church indicated that she was quite willing to take drastic disciplinary action against her ministers, rather than have the complete authority of the Word questioned in the slightest fashion.

But there is more to the answer to this question. We hold to the Word of God as it has been interpreted by the living Church. We do not, like some sects in our day, try to cut ourselves off from history and appeal directly to the Word. We believe in the classic formulations which saints of past



*Church at Oak Glen,  
Illinois.*

ages have made, in which the truth embodied in that Word is expressed better than we could do it for ourselves.

All of this may be said to be included in the heritage of which we have spoken earlier. But it is not pointless to mention it here. The point is that we have not changed our standards. We have not discarded them in favor of something else, nor have we forgotten them.

This is not to say that we have done nothing at all with them. One of the things we have done with respect to them is to define how rigidly and narrowly they may be applied.\* We did this by borrowing, from the Netherlands, the Conclusions of Utrecht with respect to four points of doctrine. In brief, these conclusions, which we adopted in 1908, provide that no one of us shall molest another for interpreting certain points of doctrine in another way than we. This is certainly not perfect freedom in doctrine, nor would that be desirable. All of these disputed points are within the circle of what is contained in the creeds. But this means that we are big enough and humble enough to recognize that there are some questions which are unanswered; and that someone has the right to

differ with us on those questions and still be called a Christian.

We have also been busy applying these standards. We have demonstrated that we meant what we said when we adopted them. This has taken place especially in several doctrinal controversies. We shall mention just one at this time. It concerns the doctrines of dispensationalism. When one of our ministers was at odds with the creeds on this point, we applied the creeds to his case, even though it meant the loss to our denomination of that able minister and many of his followers.

Again, when it has seemed to be necessary, we have labored to revise the creeds, so that they might never become dead letters. By these revision labors we have demonstrated that we are as much in earnest about keeping these standards alive and effective as our Church has ever been. Furthermore, we are seeking constantly to work the Word and Creeds more deeply into the life of the Church, by revising our praise books, our liturgical forms, our church order, and our instructional aids, to keep them in line with this faith and its classic statements.

And to mention one other effort, we have

*Calvin Church of  
Wyckoff, New Jersey.*



sought to make these standards understood and appreciated by the members of the Church. We have done this through diligent efforts at education. We have confirmed that educational effort by the publications of our Church. We labor year in year out to deepen our members' knowledge by the preaching of the Word. And at one time, more than half a century ago, the Church took steps to see to it that the parents who presented their children for baptism were confessing members of the Church. That is to say, we insisted not only on knowledge of what the standards contained, but on acceptance of them in the members' lives. And in distinction from many another denomination, this system is enforced by discipline, not because we hate the sinner, but because we love him and wish to save him from straying from the path of truth.

Have we kept the faith? Yes, we have. But there are a few things yet to be said. In the first place, there is nowhere near as much interest in the content of that faith as once there was. Although this is an individual judgment, we make it with confidence. If we have not kept up our interest in the content of this faith, it must be said that we

have not kept it with enough enthusiasm.

But at the same time there is another sense in which we might say that we have been too enthusiastic about keeping the faith. We have tended too much to keep it hermetically sealed. We seem to have defended it with an excess of zeal, as if it had to be kept from contact with sinners. But this faith was given to us that sinners might know it. We have been too content with what has been said about this faith in the past. We have been too reluctant to say anything new about it in the present. But this will never do. In the future we must go forward. The faith must be kept, but it must not be embalmed. \*It is a living faith. Perhaps nothing quite so much as this will serve to restore that enthusiasm for this faith which once drove our forefathers to seek a home in the new world. If we can see our faith as a living faith; if we can be constantly at work to apply it anew to the world we live in; then the interest in it and the enthusiasm for it will not lag far behind.

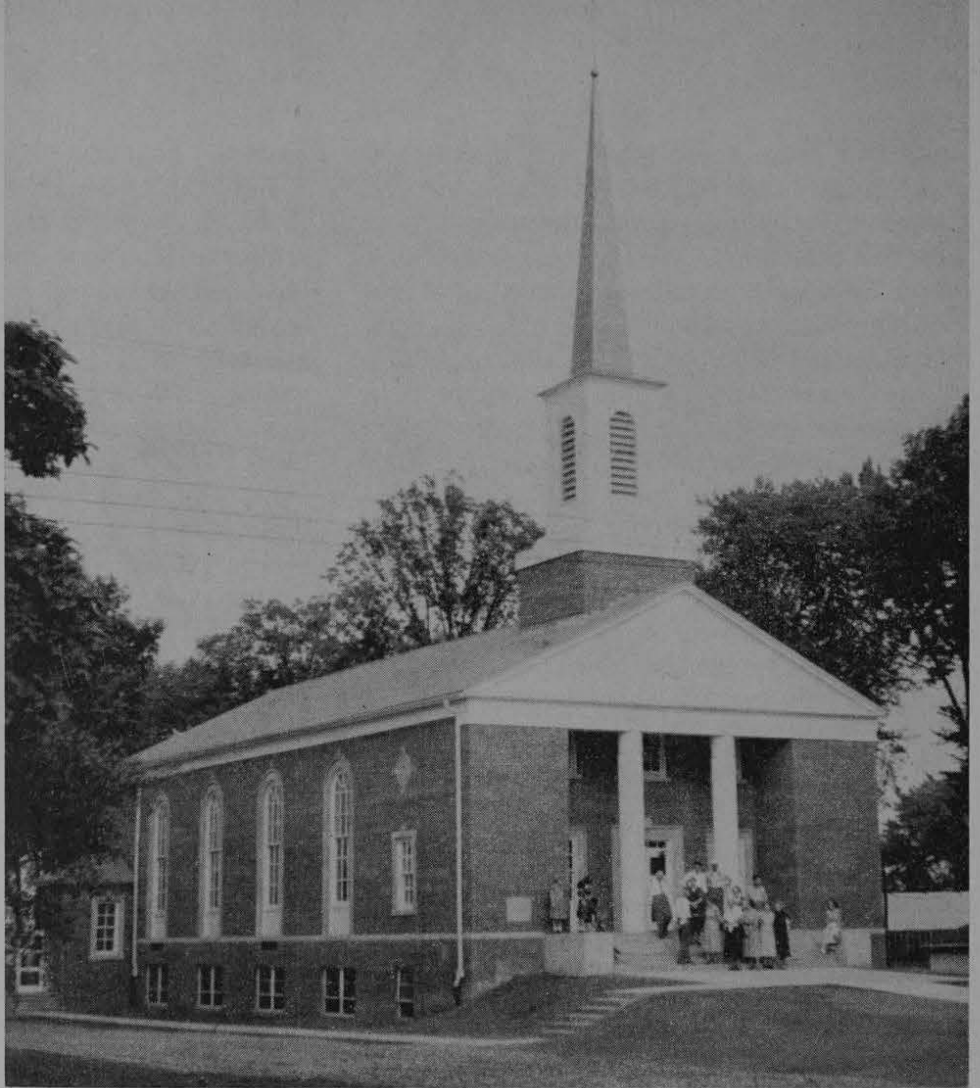
### **The Church Finds Herself**

One hundred years is a long time. One would certainly think that by the time of



*Church at  
Dearborn, Michigan.*

*Church at  
Willard, Ohio.*



*Parkview Heights  
Church,  
Cincinnati, Ohio.*





*Second Church at  
Highland, Indiana.*



*First Church at  
Paterson, New Jersey.*

her centennial year, the Christian Reformed Church would have found her role in life. One would certainly suppose that her life would be quite well stabilized by that time. If that is the case, what is the position of the Christian Reformed Church in North American life today?

We must say that there is as yet no final answer to that question. In saying that, we are not passing judgment on those who have gone before in our history. There have been many answers given to many questions as the years went by. New questions have been faced from year to year, from decade to decade, and answers have been given to many of them. But the answers are not yet complete and final. And if we may venture a prediction, they never will be, until the Lord himself returns to present the perfect answers. It is not the task of our generation to present the final answers, once and for all. Our task is rather to see to it that the temporary answers we give are answers which arise

from a real understanding of the questions and a real dedication to the heritage which God has given us.

An orthodox Reformed Church anywhere in the world has the problem of applying its heritage to the society in which it is found. This is never an easy problem, but one demanding the best efforts which the Church is able to put forth. It is never a problem which is finally answered; it calls for constant readjustment to changing situations. This problem, then, the Christian Reformed Church shares with the Church of Jesus Christ throughout the world.

But there is one aspect of that problem which the Christian Reformed Church in the new world experienced in distinction from many other Reformed Churches. This Church was born in an adopted country, and was constantly fed by newcomers to that country. The application of the historic faith to the society in which she lived was complicated by her own problem of adjustment to American life: language, customs, and beliefs.

This was a many-sided problem, and its

*Church at Rochester, New York.*



favorable and unfavorable aspects could not always be kept distinct from each other. America was the haven of refuge for many small and oppressed groups. The founders of the Christian Reformed Church looked forward eagerly to life in their adopted country in the expectation of finding opportunities which they felt they could not find elsewhere. But America was also the melting pot, which not only took in new groups, but by the pressure of its own conditions transformed them, and made them fit into her own peculiar patterns. There were elements in this situation which the Christian Reformed fathers feared, and they were not without justification in doing so. And so to "Americanize" was for some a goal to be pursued with all possible speed. For others it was a terrible thing, to be warded off with every available defense. And for many it was very hard to make up their minds which of these courses they should pursue.

And so it was that some sought to continue to use the Dutch language exclusively. For many years, no other language was used in the church services. Nor was any other lan-

guage used in the ecclesiastical assemblies, in the catechism classes, or in the church papers. Particular concern was shown for the children, lest they lose their heritage of the faith; for the Reformed faith, so it seemed, was peculiarly associated with the Dutch language. But increasingly other voices were heard, contesting this position. And as time went by, the most telling argument these people could muster was concerned precisely with these children and young people. The Church, it was argued, would not keep them, but would lose them by its persistence in holding to a language which was not the language of the new country.

This language problem produced a prolonged crisis in the Church, which was repeated in locality after locality. As early as 1887 the desire for English services had resulted in the formation of the first all-English congregation of the denomination. But up to the very year of the centennial, services in the Dutch language never quite died out,

*Church at Whitinsville, Massachusetts.*



*First Church at  
Englewood, Chicago.*



not even in the United States. In the official Acts of the Synods, the language transition took place gradually over a period from 1892 to 1934. Nobody will ever know the full story of the agony, the struggles, and the heated arguments which took place as congregation after congregation faced the problem of changing its language.

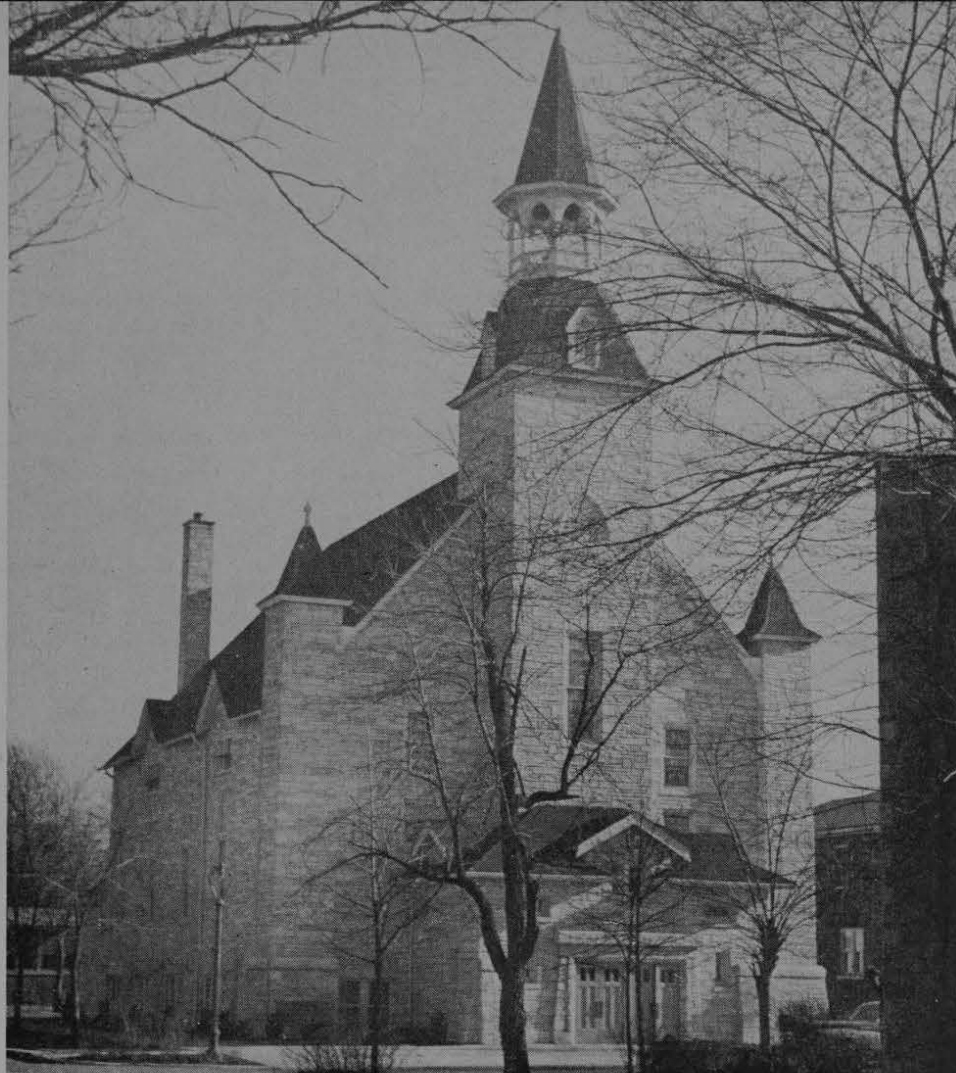
If any one date is to be set as the turning point in this problem, it must be the First World War. This was the time when the handwriting on the wall began to be clearly seen, not by a few but by the many. Now immigration slowed down to a trickle, and the Church, after more than half a century in the new country, began to feel herself inevitably committed to the full use of the English language.

And yet, even at this date the problem of Americanization cannot be said to be fully solved. We do not have reference to the fact

that many new immigrants are coming into Canada; for they realize, more quickly and clearly than an older generation did, that the transition must be made, the sooner the better. But with the settlement of the language problem only the complicating factor was settled. The real problem, that of witness in society, remained, and now had to be faced directly. Was the Church to influence society for the better, or was society to influence the Church for evil?

That problem was faced in acute form in the Common Grace controversy and the declarations on worldly amusements. These took place during the decade of the 1920's. But even these questions were not settled beyond dispute; and if they had been, the problem would still have remained in a hundred other forms.

The Common Grace controversy was directly related to advancing Americanization.



*Second Church at  
Roseland, Chicago.*

It was felt that this brought also increasing conformity to the world. In defense against these inroads of worldliness, some began to deny the existence of a grace of God shown to all men in common. The insistence of the Christian Reformed Church that there was such a grace led to the departure of several groups from her fellowship, and to the rise of the Protestant Reformed Church.

The problem of worldliness remained — as it does to this day. In 1928 the synod adopted a declaration on worldliness, especially as it comes to expression in amusements. For more than two decades there was uncertainty as to whether the Church had or had not made legislation concerning three forms of worldly amusements. But in 1951 the synod adopted an interpretation which again laid the emphasis where it had been from the beginning: on the principles underlying the decisions which the Christian himself must make.

These are two illustrations of the problem which faces us. The problem is the relation of the faith by which we live to the world in which we live. A simple presentation of that problem is to say that we must choose between shutting ourselves in with that faith, or proceeding aggressively into the world with it. But perhaps that is to put matters too simply; for everyone agrees that we ought to do the latter. The question rather concerns this problem: when have we so defended the faith that we have lost contact with the world? Or, when have we so contacted the world that we have lost our distinctive faith?

These questions lie close to several other problems which have concerned the Church for a long time. The problems do not arise out of this question, but are closely related to it. One of these problems is the relation of the Christian laboring man to labor organ-



*Church at  
Prospect Park,  
New Jersey.*

izations. For about three quarters of her century of existence, the Christian Reformed Church has been concerned with this problem. She maintains that it is not her duty to enter directly into the formation of labor organizations. But what advice shall she give to her members? And how strictly and by what means shall she enforce the observance of that advice?

Very early the answer was given that there were some conditions under which the Christian laboring man could not belong to a union. That is still the Church's position. In the earliest decisions the question of secret societies was linked with the labor question. Later the Church said that Christians were not to be members of unions which gave constitutional warrant to sin or championed sin in their regular activities. The Church has also been consistent in urging her members to set up Christian labor organizations

wherever this is possible.

But there is dissatisfaction of several kinds with this position. Some say that the Church has not been consistent in applying it. Others say that the position itself is wrong, because no Christian can be a member of an organization without a distinctively Christian basis. Still others maintain that the Church has been lukewarm in her support of Christian organizations.

And how is this related to the Christian's witness in the world? This is the way the question of witness is involved in the question of labor. How shall the Christian impact upon the world of labor be expressed? Shall it be expressed only in separate organizations? Shall it be expressed only by affiliating with the general organizations? Very few are saying the latter. Many more are saying the former. But the majority of the members — and the official pronouncements — are saying

*Church at  
Lansing, Illinois.*



that while separate Christian organizations are preferred, both are permitted. The decision whether to set up a Christian labor union or to carry one's Christian witness into another labor union is to be made according to the circumstances in any place and in any situation.

There is no denying that we have a problem here. But the problem is deeper than the mere question of organizations. It is possible to carry a Christian witness into either a Christian or a neutral labor organization. It is also possible to be very lukewarm about one's Christianity in either. The way of least resistance is an abiding temptation. No mere organization and no mere church pronouncement will remove that temptation. This question of witness is still a question without a final answer as the Christian Reformed Church begins her second century.

Another problem concerns the witness and action of the Church with respect to divorce. Problems of marriage and divorce were present in the Christian Reformed Church even earlier than the labor problem. They were present at the very earliest meetings of the general assemblies of the church. The question which faces the Church is not whether divorce is an evil; all are agreed on that. Divorce, on any but the one ground permitted by the Bible, is a sin which calls for repentance. And this sin is vastly complicated when divorced persons remarry.

But the question with which the Church is concerned is whether persons thus divorced and remarried are automatically and permanently barred from membership in the church. This, too, has bearing on the church's witness in the world. On the one hand, the church feels the responsibility to sound a clear note of opposition to the rising divorce

evil. But on the other hand, those who seek to carry the gospel, particularly to those who have never been members of the church, are constantly coming into contact with those who have the sin of divorce and remarriage in their past. If there is no forgiveness for those people, there can be no membership for them either; and the only message the church can have for them is a message of reproof and condemnation. A recent decision of the synod declares that such people are not to be automatically barred from membership. Time alone will tell whether this is a satisfactory solution to the problem.

In the midst of her struggles with these problems, the Christian Reformed Church has also engaged in time-honored activities to instruct and build up her youth. She is working constantly to improve her catechetical instruction, so that it will meet the demands of the changing times. She has for many years lent faithful support to the cause of Christian day schools, and notes with gratitude that an increasing number of her members send their children to these schools. Her Sunday Schools demand the labors of

writers and editors, as well as thousands of volunteer teachers. When her youth are called into the service of the country, she seeks them out through service pastors. And the preaching of the Word twice every Sunday, with the help of the Heidelberg Catechism in one of the services, continues throughout the land. There is also an extensive organization of societies for children and young people, in which Scripture study and Christian fellowship are encouraged.

There are some gratifying results from all this activity. The full auditoriums of the Christian Reformed Church, in every season of the year, attract the favorable attention of observers. The Christian Reformed traveller who seeks out a distant church of his own denomination on Sunday may be confident that he will hear the true Word of God preached no matter where he finds himself. And yet here, too, problems are to be found. Considering the great amount of effort put forth, the results are sometimes quite discouraging. The knowledge of Scripture, the understanding of doctrine, the interest in organizations for youth and adults alike, and the willingness to devote one's life to sacrificial service all leave much to be desired. The time has not yet come — nor will it —

*Second Church of Denver, Colorado.*



when efforts to keep up and improve these services can be relaxed. The time has not yet come — nor will it — when earnest prayer for the welfare of the Church is no longer needed.

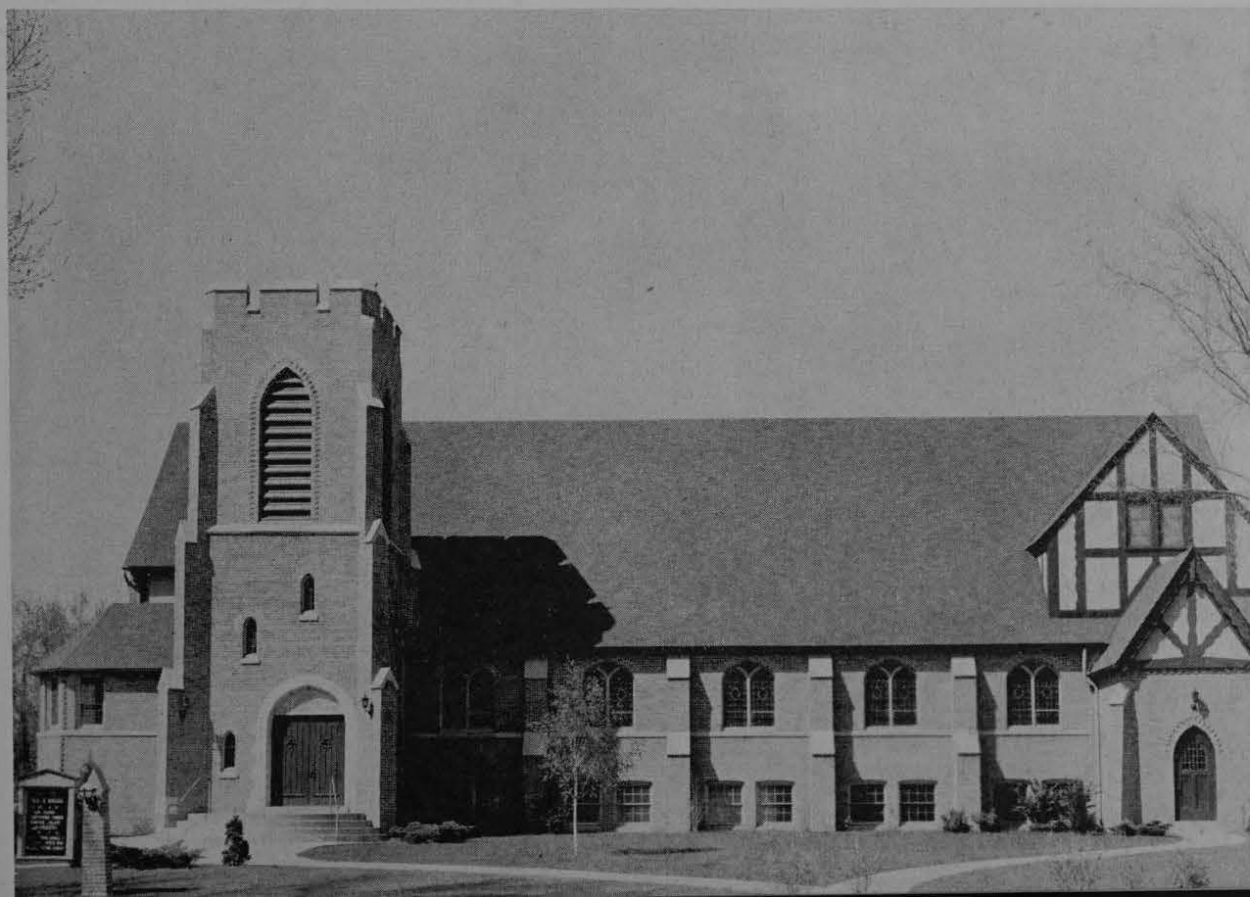
The Christian Reformed Church has also been active in seeking to spread the gospel to those who do not know salvation through Jesus Christ. She carries on foreign mission work in many lands; and this work is constantly expanding. An increasing number of her ministers are at work in evangelism in the home country. Many radio broadcasts are sent out. The Back to God Hour, supported by the whole denomination, is a very successful venture in radio witness. There is a rapid growth in the volume of missionary work done in the neighborhoods of the various congregations. The publication work of the Church, especially as reflected in *The Banner*, attracts favorable interest. Well-written tracts are available for distribution, and many make use of them. All of these labors are described in other sections of this book. They are mentioned here merely as part of the Church's consciousness of her mission in the world. —

But once again — the problems. There is always, of course, the problem of the sinful heart and the resistance which it shows to

the message of repentance. But, particularly at home, we have another problem. What kind of standards shall we set for the admission of converts to our Church? How much knowledge shall we require of them before admitting them to membership? What kind of a welcome shall we tender them? How much of a change or adjustment is necessary in our Church before a person who is not Dutch by background can feel perfectly at home in it?

There is progress — and there are problems. How then must a member of the Christian Reformed Church regard his spiritual mother? Not with complacency, certainly. After one hundred years she has not fully arrived. She is not yet made perfect. But not with discouragement either. The very fact that problems exist is a proof that she is alive; a dead Church has no problems. And the fact that these problems distress her is a sign that she is awake. The Christian Reformed Church is in the process of finding herself. She has been doing this for a long time, but her present situation calls for renewed discoveries. And, if it please God,

*First Church of Pella, Iowa.*



*First Church at  
Zeeland, Michigan.*



*First Church at  
Grand Haven, Michigan.*



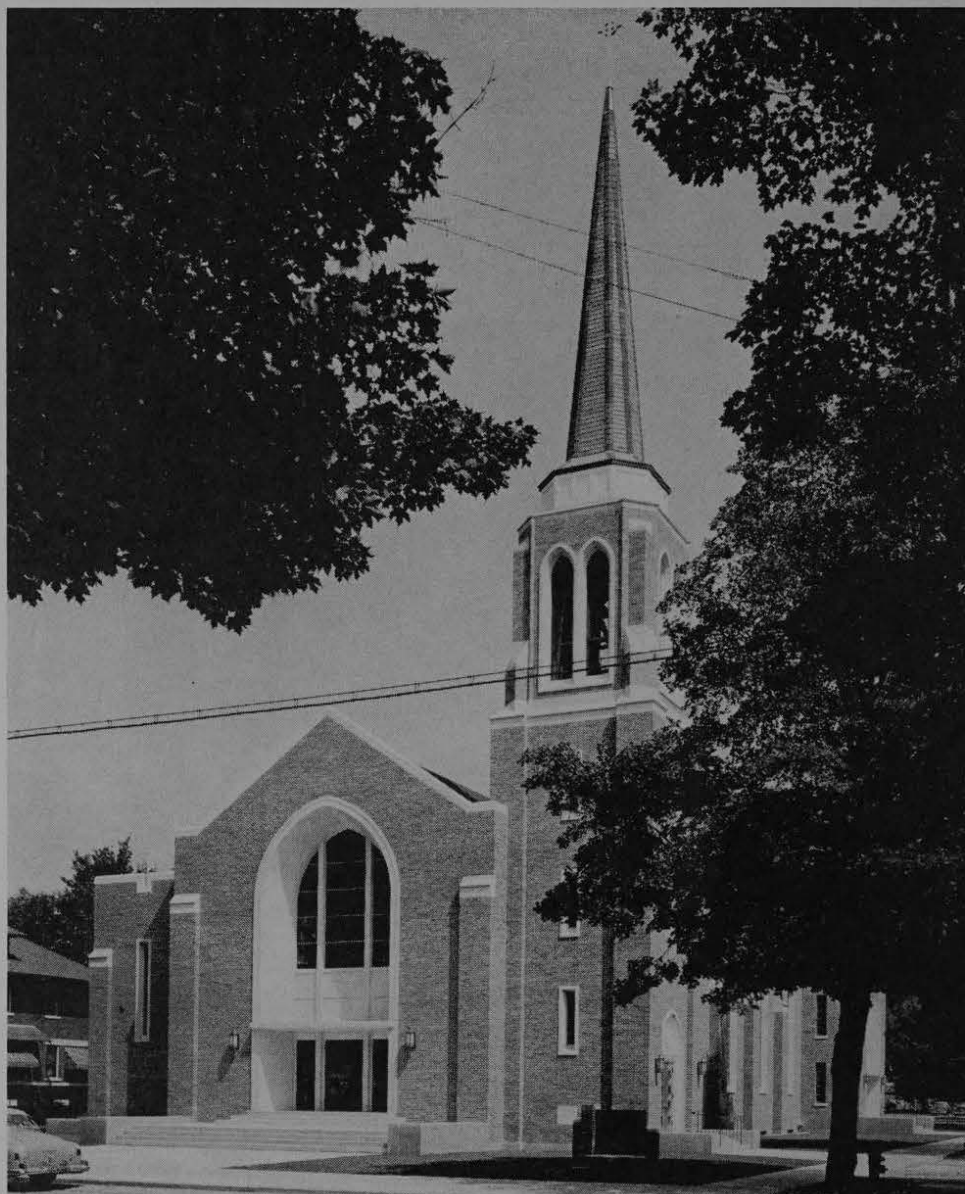


*Plymouth Heights,  
Grand Rapids.*



*First Church at  
South Holland,  
Illinois*

*Central Avenue  
Church,  
Holland, Michigan.*



she will continue to do so for many years to come.

### **What Now?**

How foolish mortal man appears when he tries to peer into the future! We who are inaccurate as to the past, who do not penetrate beneath the surface of the present, how can we know anything at all about what is to come? And is it necessary at all to say anything about the years to come, when what we are celebrating is the favor shown to us in one hundred years past?

Recognizing all the uncertainties, we shall

nevertheless seek to answer the question, "And what now?" We committed ourselves to something of this sort when we accepted as our centennial slogan the words, "God's favor is our challenge." There have been challenges in the past. But the main thrust of the word "challenge" is a forward-looking one.

It is perfectly true that there is a curtain between our eyes and the future. We will not try to deny that it is there. But there are some things which abide, and with these we must reckon. There are other things also which seem to call for action or for answers;



*West Side Church, Cleveland, Ohio.*

*Interior of Calvin Church, Grand Rapids.*



and we must reckon with these, too, if we are to attempt to do the work of the Lord intelligently.

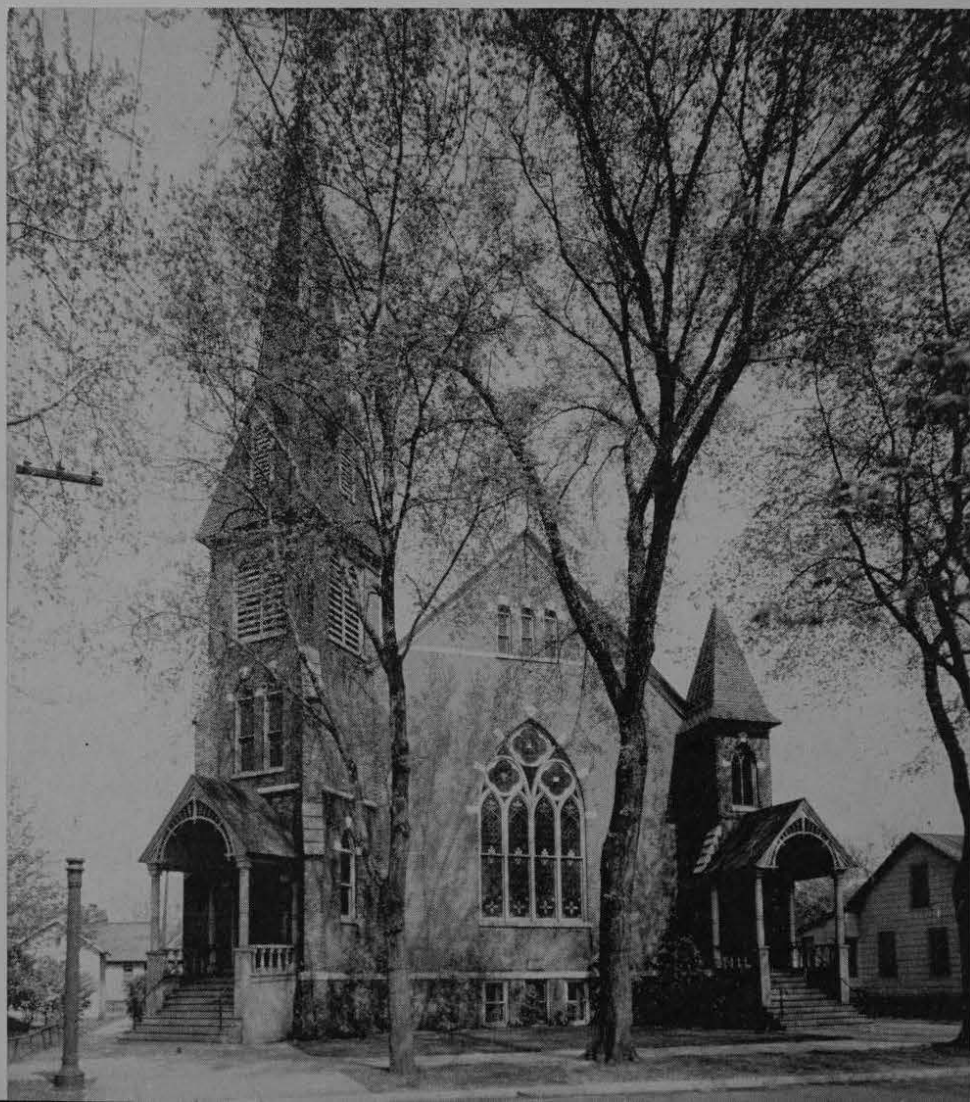
In the past, the activity of the Christian Reformed Church has been concerned with the abiding faith as applied to a changing world. The future activity of this Church will be concerned with the very same thing. If, then, we can predict something of the nature of the changes in that world, we may be able to suggest what that activity will produce.

Unless something changes suddenly and radically, the years just ahead of the Christian Reformed Church will be years in which men will be talking very much about the unity and cooperation of the various branches of the Christian Church. The Christian Reformed Church has in the past been very cautious about the matter of unity and the

matter of cooperation. The union discussions which have proved fruitful have been outnumbered two to one by those which have proved fruitless. A union with Classis Hackensack of the True Protestant Reformed Dutch Church was actually carried out. But union discussions with the United Presbyterians and with the Reformed Church in America broke down. As to cooperative enterprises, our Church held membership in the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America from 1918 to 1924; but since that time she has never seriously considered membership in that organization or its successor, the National Council of Churches. Membership in the National Association of Evangelicals lasted just a bit longer, from 1943 to 1951. But though many thought this to be a congenial fellowship and a profitable activity, it does not appear that the subject of membership is actually to be reopened for discussion, much less for action.

But these are past actions. What about the

*First Church  
of Muskegon,  
Michigan.*





*Second Church of Fremont, Michigan.*

present and future? Discussions and explorations of unity are not to be avoided. They are part of the religious climate of our day. But, more important, the Church of Jesus Christ has the duty to seek unity with all diligence.

Thus the Christian Reformed Church can take pleasure from the fact that she was convener and co-organizer of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod in 1946. And although this is as yet an organization which has not fully found itself, it must be developed with all zeal. We may not be impatient with it. We may not discard it. It is our duty to improve its operation to the best of our ability.

What about that much larger organization, the World Council of Churches? The Christian Reformed Church, we predict, will not seek membership in that organization unless a radical change comes about in the nature of the organization itself. The desire of the

Christian Reformed Church that the Church be definitely committed to the inspiration of the Scriptures will make for very cautious procedure with respect to membership in the World Council.

It is significant also that in two distinct ways the Christian Reformed Church is entering into a broader fellowship. She is becoming associated with a greater and greater number of Churches, spread out over an ever widening portion of the world's area. These additions, in recent years, to her fellowship include Churches in Japan, Korea, Ceylon, Australia, and New Zealand, and a newly organized Church on the mission field in Nigeria.

And not only is she looking farther and farther afield but the Christian Reformed Church



*Church at San Diego, California.*

is also seeking closer fellowship with Churches with which she is already well acquainted. A synod has recently authorized ecumenical discussions with the Orthodox Presbyterian and Reformed Presbyterian Churches.

Who can tell what ecumenical changes another hundred years of history may bring? Another century might bring a union or several unions with other bodies; for some reasons for separation dissipate with the passage of time. It might bring a considerable consolidation of Reformed bodies throughout the world; for ease of travel and communication are shrinking the barriers to such action. It might bring other activities of a like sort. Something of the identity of what is now the Christian Reformed Church might be lost in that process. But this would in no sense be a tragedy, unless the faith itself were also weakened by such action. Whatever causes that faith to advance is to be welcomed by all who truly love the Christian Reformed Church.

In a changing world the abiding faith must also be transmitted to the rising generations. If we could give a confident prediction as to

how well this will be done in the coming years, we might answer the deepest question of many a mother's heart. But this prediction is impossible to make.

We must content ourselves with just a few observations. First, the problems are ever more difficult. The allurements of the world, the impact of scepticism, the way of least resistance are not essentially different from what they have always been. But their impact upon young people is more direct and forceful than ever before. Second, the problem will not be solved through official agencies alone. Protection of our children from temptation and unbelief is something which is quite beyond our powers. It cannot be done without prayer. And the best efforts of churches and schools cannot undo the influence, or lack of influence, of the home. Thirdly, if this problem is not solved, if this crisis is not met, the Christian Reformed Church of the future will be so radically different that it will be unrecognizable. And



*Church at Phoenix, Arizona.*

that difference will not be one of improvement, but of decay.

We can be more confident with respect to another prediction. The Christian Reformed Church in the years to come is going to address herself more and more to the work of evangelism. This is an age in which many may live within the sound of the gospel and yet never hear it. The Christian Reformed Church is going to wrestle with that problem. She is wrestling with it already.

This Church will experience some internal pains in making her address to this work. But the witness will be improved. We make this prediction confidently. There is a groundswell of insistence upon this task within the Church. There is an uneasy conscience with respect to the record of the past. There are men and women, deeply in love with the faith, who are learning the techniques of making positive contact with their friends and neighbors in the name of that faith. The admonition of the prophet is being heeded,

"Enlarge the place of thy tent . . . lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes."

We may expect that in the future the Christian Reformed Church will experience anew what many men have experienced in the past. The areas of difficulty, of pain, of danger, will by faith prove to be the areas of the greatest profit and growth. The absorption of the new members in Canada will not take place without some difficulty. But the effort will be stimulating and profitable. The very friction produced by the renewed meeting of old world and new will kindle new flames of love for the cause of Christ within the bosom of the Church. Any attempt to restate and reapply our theology will be attended by painful difficulties, and by trial and error. But we shall find that it will result in a theology newly and freshly appreciated.

There will be some painful moments as past policies are reassessed in the light of new situations. We who set such store by tradition sometimes find ourselves hampered by traditions which have become outworn. Or we may merely be following traditions with-

*First Church of  
Los Angeles,  
California.*



out realizing what they are for.

We shall have to be constantly aware of the fact that institutions and organizations do not of themselves constitute a Christian witness. In any institution, even one so dear to our hearts as the Christian schools, we must be constantly asking what that institution is seeking to do. An institution must have a program. But, more than that, even the programs need behind them men and women who are deeply committed to the service of the King. When this is the case, the difficulties will be overcome, the institutions will be raised, the programs will be

devised, and the witness will be rendered. But if this is not the case, none of these things will happen.

The deepest and most persistent problems will find their solution in an ever-new commitment to the service of God. It is this which will expand the mission witness, give new content to the educational effort, unite the various areas of the Church, and inspire the young. This ever-new commitment, therefore, is what we need.

And how shall we get it? It must be preached from the pulpits by men who have that commitment themselves. It must be

taught by everyone who teaches; and let us not omit from that list of teachers the fathers and mothers in the homes. It must be sought fervently by prayer, for this commitment is one of those good and perfect gifts which are from above, coming down from the Father of lights. Old members and young members, converts and catechumens, big churches and little, must be committed to this service. This is what we are here for.

As we stand at the hundred-year mark, we may count successes and failures. The official position of the Church marks the retention of the same faith with which we started one hundred years ago. The basic unity of the Church on this position seems to be as strong as ever. The Scriptures are defended as the Word of God, while at the same time we resist the errors of Fundamentalism. Some beginnings are made toward the effective transmission of this faith to those who do not know it.

On the other hand, sometimes we have

seemed to feel so selfish with respect to our heritage that we did not want others to share it with us. Materialism has made its inroads upon us. There are signs of the loss of our first love, of a lack of interest in the Reformed faith, a lack of knowledge of it, and a lack of commitment to it. In many respects and at many times it seems as if we are dangerously lukewarm.

What confidence, then, may we have for the future? Whatever it is, it cannot be in ourselves. This is not the direction in which we are urged to turn by the experience of the past. The Christian Reformed Church has lived and grown through wars, depressions, doctrinal controversies, and other crises. But she has not done so in her own strength.

Peculiar as it may seem, there is profound comfort in this fact. The very weaknesses we have shown should give us not less but more confidence with respect to the future. For the God who has supplied the strength and growth in the past is far more faithful than the best of us. If we but see to it that we are on the Lord's side; that what he says

*Church at Alameda, California.*



*Bethany Church,  
Bellflower,  
California.*



is precious to us; that we go where he commands, do what he bids, are what he wants us to be; if we see to that, our future is secure.

And are we too weak to insure this by ourselves? Then let us ask him to do it for us. Surely, such a prayer will have an answer! But let us ask this together, that we may receive it together also. For it is not the salvation of an individual here or there that we seek, but the preservation of an entire Church for the continued and improved service of the living God.

We are travelling through life to eternity. An honest self-appraisal sometimes makes it

appear that we are dragging our feet; and at other times it seems that we are groping and stumbling. But let us be sure that we walk in the light of the faith which our fathers possessed. And let us, by grace, learn new things about walking together in love. Let us practice love for God, love for each other, love for the fellow man. And then we shall discover that we are neither lagging nor stumbling, but marching.

Like a mighty army moves the Church of God;  
Brothers, we are treading where the saints  
have trod!

We are not divided, all one body we;  
One in faith and doctrine, one in charity.

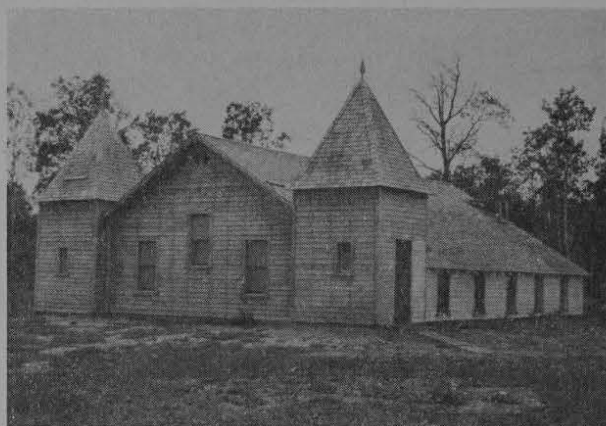


*Church at Hanford, California.*

*First Church of Artesia, California.*



*The first meeting places  
in the Canadian  
provinces reflected the  
pioneer conditions  
of the new Dutch settlers.  
These church buildings  
at Lacombe, Alberta, and  
Houston, British Columbia,  
are among the earlier  
places of worship.*



*Beverly, Alberta, Canada.*



*Chatham, Ontario, Canada.*

*Church at  
Mt. Hamilton,  
Ontario, Canada.*

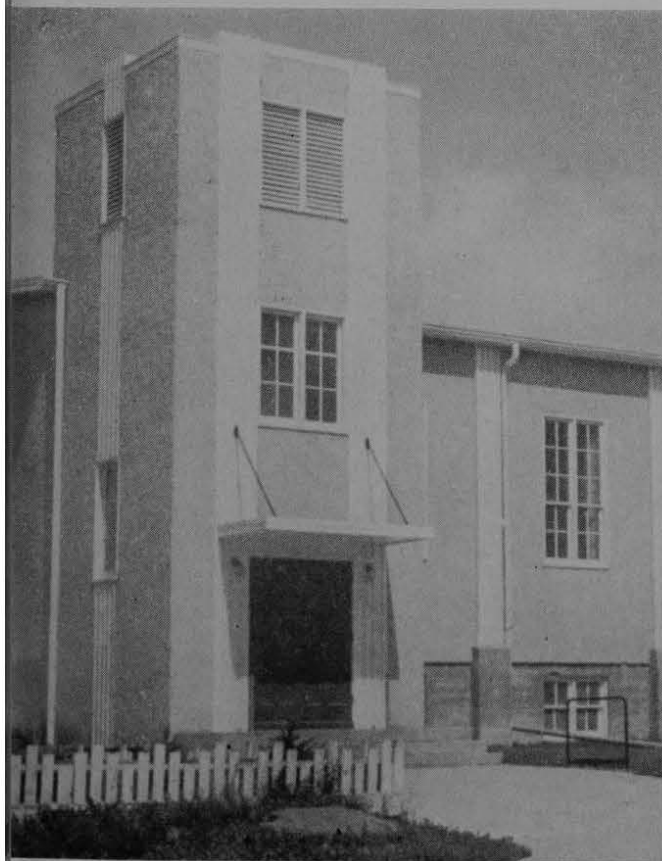


*Calvin Church,  
Ottawa, Ontario,  
Canada.*



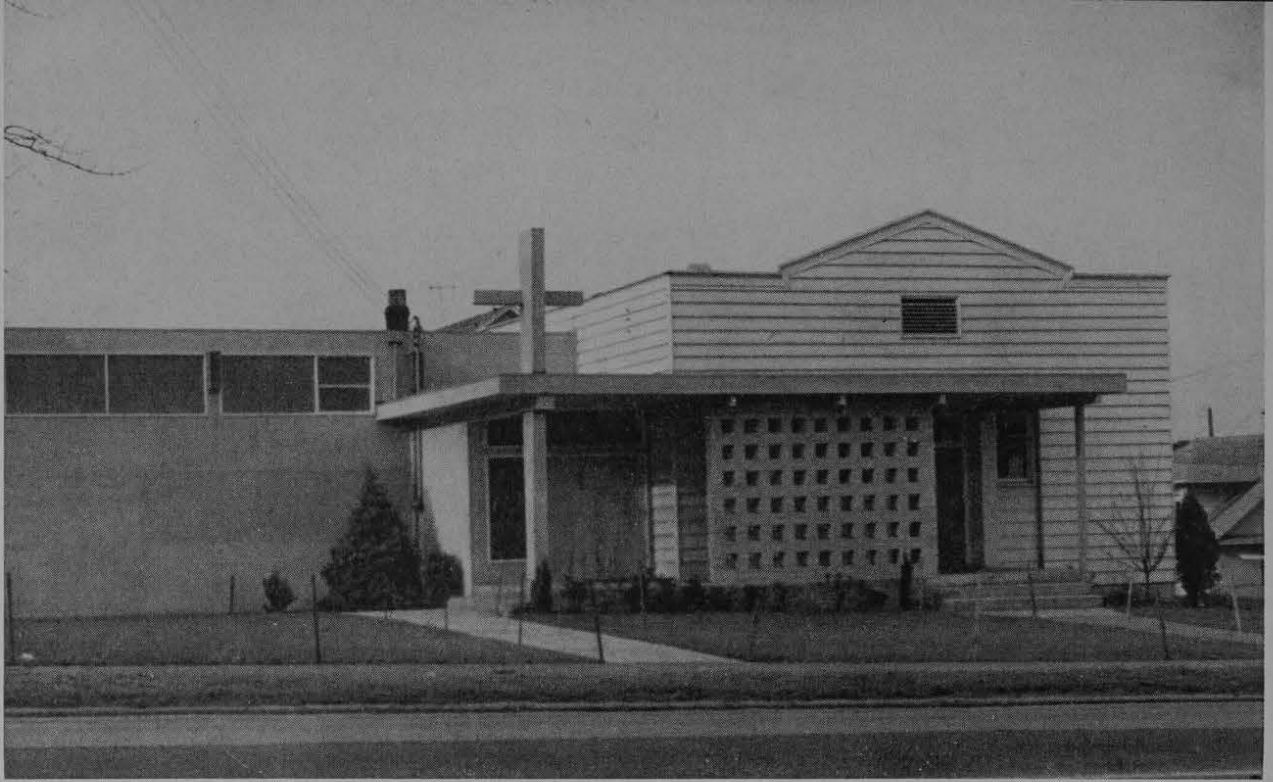
*With the great influx of immigrants following World War II, congregations in Canada multiplied fast, and many congregations grew large and built handsome new churches for their worship services.*

*Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada.*



*First Church of Toronto, Canada.*





*Church at Seattle, Washington.*

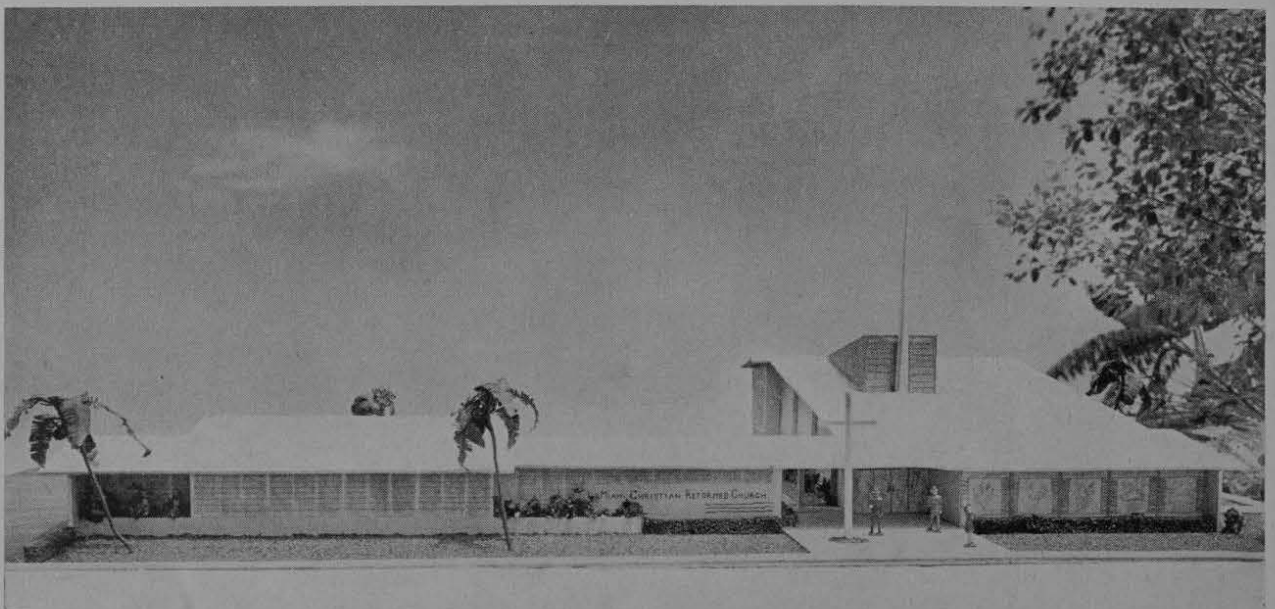
What does God say to us in our centennial? He says, "Hold fast that which thou hast, that no one take thy crown." He says also, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel." He says, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

And what shall we say to him? Let us say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

"O God, thou hast taught me from my

youth; and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now also when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have declared thy strength unto the next generation, thy might to every one that is to come" (Psalm 71:17, 18).

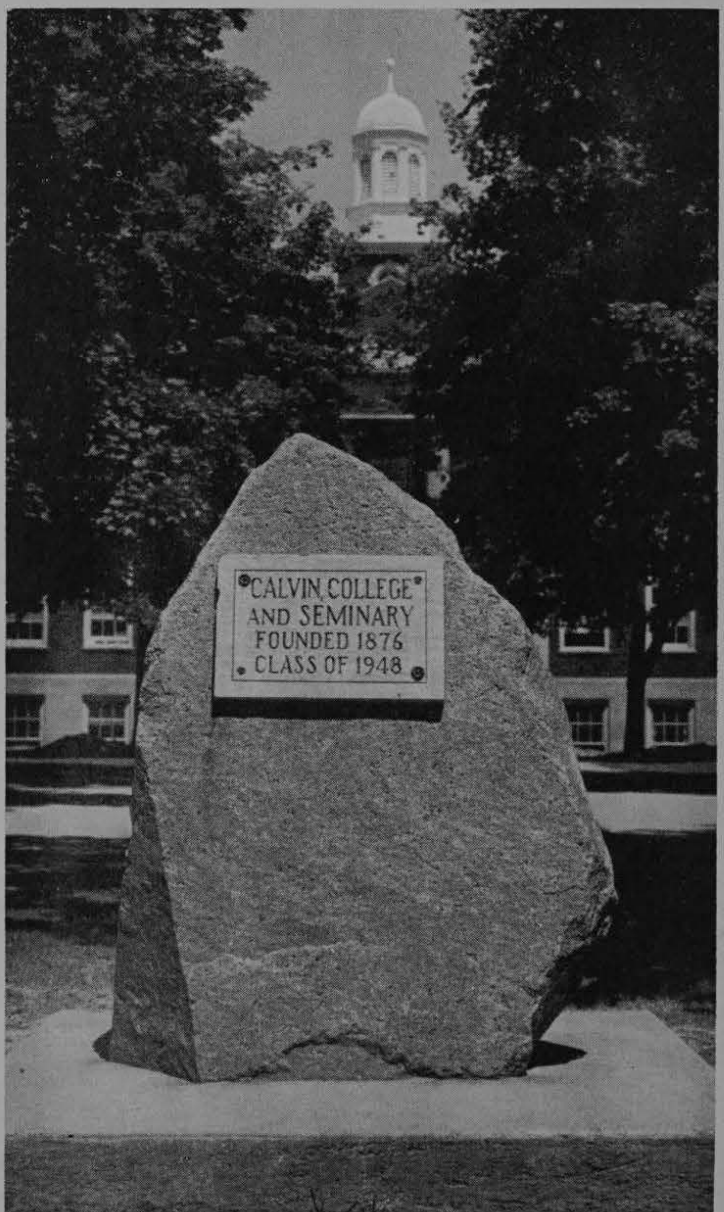
*Church at Miami, Florida.*



# CALVIN COLLEGE AND SEMINARY



*Alumni and students cast  
loving eyes upon the  
home of their alma mater  
from this memorial  
standing at the entrance  
to the campus.*



## Calvin Seminary in the Life of the Church

By JOHN H. KROMMINGA

IN THE centennial year of the Christian Reformed Church, Calvin Seminary is eighty-one years old. But in a sense the School has been part of the Church from the very beginning. The single great reason for the erection and support of Calvin Seminary is to provide ministers for the Christian Reformed Church. Less formal efforts to provide these ministers were being made even before 1876. And the need out of which these efforts arose was felt even earlier than that.

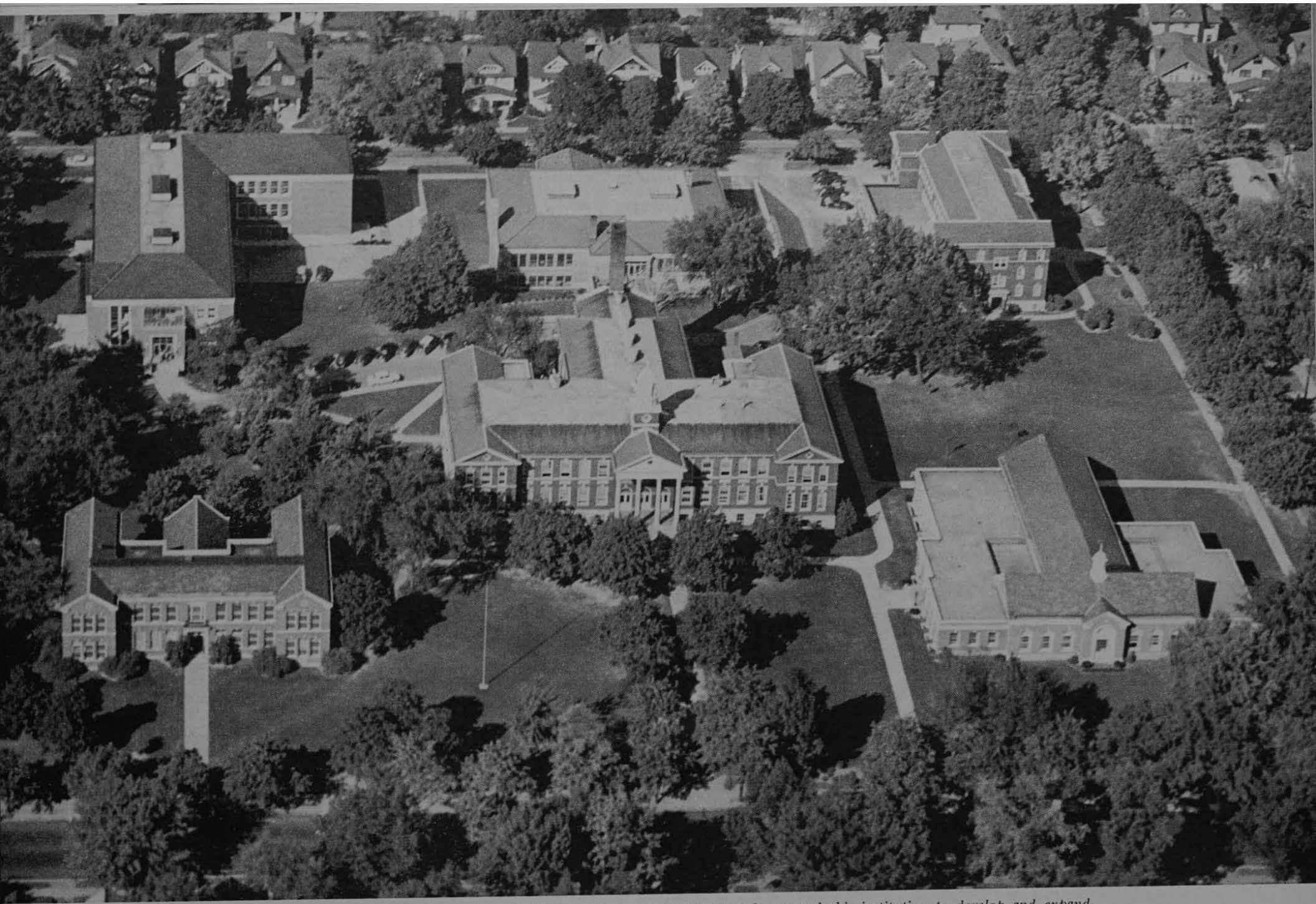
Less than four years after the founding of the Christian Reformed Church that need was expressed. In February, 1861, the general assembly of the Church was confronted with the necessity of providing for the education of ministers. Nobody can deny that the need was acute. The Church had only one minister. The possibility of calling men from other American denominations was remote. And almost as remote was the prospect of obtaining help from the old country to meet the need of the struggling new denomination.

The casual observer might suggest still another way out of the difficulty. Why could not a group of immigrants on the frontier be satisfied with an uneducated ministry? No doubt there was something tempting about this idea. And the urgency of the need did force some concessions on educational standards. But nobody who really knew these settlers could seriously suggest that this would be for them a permanent solution.

Their answer was rather to work their way up to that point where, in 1876, a school was established. From the first formal mention of the need in 1861, there were some years in which nothing was accomplished. Then there were more years in which indi-

*In this building, known as "De Theologische School Der Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk," (dedicated 1891), Calvin Seminary grew to maturity, added an Academy and later a full liberal-arts College as well.*





*An aerial view of the present campus amply illustrates how wonderfully God has caused this institution to develop and expand.*



*Young men are trained for the ministry in this Hekman Memorial Seminary Building which is located on the southwest corner of the campus.*

*More than 455 men have completed the schooling needed for a BD degree in this building since it was erected in 1930.*



vidual pastors gave instruction to prospective ministers in their parsonages. The Revs. Wilhelmus H. Van Leeuwen and R. Duiker gave some such instruction. The man who took the most active part in this initial program was the Rev. Douwe J. Van der Werp. But he himself saw clearly how inadequate such training was. He was most insistent that someone should be called who would devote himself wholly to this task.

After several unsuccessful attempts to obtain a teacher from the Netherlands, the general assembly persuaded the Rev. Geert Egberts Boer, minister of the First Church of Grand Rapids, to undertake the task of providing theological instruction. He was installed as professor on March 15, 1876, and this has ever since been reckoned as the birthday of Calvin Seminary.

There was nothing wholly new about this procedure. In fact, it closely parallels the struggle of the mother Church in the Netherlands to provide its own ministerial supply. There, too, the first efforts had been by means

of private instruction. There, too, after about a score of years, the Theological School of the denomination was called into being at Kampen. And there were other parallels, too, closer to the scene of the birth of Calvin Seminary. In the midwestern frontier of America other groups also were establishing ministerial training schools to meet the same sort of need as was felt by the Christian Reformed Church.

But although this was not something new under the sun, there is point in recalling these events. The point is that this is the essence of Calvin Seminary. It is the Church's recognition of a need, and the meeting of that need by a means which was in keeping with that Church's ideals for the ministry. This was the reason for calling Calvin Seminary into existence. And this very respectable purpose has remained to this day the chief reason for the continued existence of the School. In the course of the years, other men besides those aspiring to the Christian Reformed ministry have been educated in this school. Other ideals besides the training of men for the practical pastorate have been and are to this day living ideals for the school. But those things remain incidental to this central purpose.

But the heart of the story remains to be told. This purpose is the reason for the hold which Calvin Seminary has on the affections of the Christian Reformed Church. That hold is most concisely expressed in the often-heard term of endearment, "our School." But it is expressed in other ways also. The Church has, in eighty-one years, sent just about one thousand young men to this School to receive their instruction. She has spent countless thousands of dollars to provide for their education and their physical needs while they were being educated. She has, as carefully as she was able, selected a total of thirty men to be full-time teachers at this School. She has not refused her School any reasonable demand that she was able to meet. From the one-man faculty on whom the educational load first rested, the faculty has grown to the present staff of eleven. The student body has expanded from the original class of seven to a high of 126 in 1951. The Church,

or members of that Church, has always been ready to provide physical facilities for that expanding student body.

And there is at least one more sign of esteem and love which the Church has given her School. There have been times in the history of Calvin Seminary when all things were not going smoothly. Like any good parent, the Church has under necessity not spared the rod. No personal feelings or secondary considerations were permitted to stand in the way of the best welfare of the School. The School was always considered more important, by far, than the wishes or welfare of any individual.

Thus there is an admirable relation between Church and school. Calvin Seminary has much for which to thank the Christian Reformed Church. And on the other hand, the School has also rendered faithful service to the Church. More than ninety per cent of the Christian Reformed ministers now living received all or part of their theological training at Calvin Seminary. The character of that training reflected the desires of the Church. And those desires themselves were the reflection of what the Church believed to be the directives of Scripture. That is to say, Calvin Seminary has been concerned throughout her history with turning out ministers who were well grounded in the orthodox Reformed faith and capable and zealous in transmitting it.

It may be said that the ministers of the Christian Reformed Church today are reasonably well equipped for their task. Furthermore, their training is such that they are one in the faith. The pure gospel is sounded so consistently from all of the pulpits that the traveller may be confident of hearing it when he steps into a church far from his home. The church which extends a call need not ask what a man's doctrinal position is, whatever other questions it may ask. If these things are true, it is Calvin Seminary which must receive a large share of the credit for them. For no other institution has so large and direct a share in the preparation of these men for their work.

Consider, then, Calvin Seminary's place in the life of the Church. The pastors who feed



*In this Seminary Chapel (above) the young men learn the art of preaching. It is also the scene of the students' daily chapel services.*

*The Hekman Memorial Library, (below) occupying the southeast corner of the campus, contains more than 69,000 books which are available to the students for reference and study.*



the flocks are sent out from this School. It is therefore not their attitudes and opinions alone, but those of their hearers as well which bear the lasting imprint of the School. On the other hand, it is those attitudes of the rank and file of the Church which, in turn, govern the policies of the School. Is it any wonder, then, that the School feels a deep commitment to the Church? And is it any wonder that the Church considers the School the apple of her eye? This is "our School."

To achieve such a position and maintain it for more than eighty years, however, has not been an easy task. Much painstaking labor went into this result. This may be viewed from various aspects.

Consider the growth of the curriculum. In the "School in the parsonage" under the Rev. Douwe J. Van der Werp, the instruction was based largely on a sort of compendium of the Christian religion written by Rev. A. Franken.

When Professor Geert E. Boer took office, the curriculum was greatly expanded, including a wide variety of preparatory and theological courses. The "first docent" carried such a teaching load as any modern professor would shudder to contemplate. With the addition of the second professor, Prof. Gerrit K. Hemkes, the curriculum was further broadened, while the load on each of the two professors was somewhat lightened.

Progress of such a sort has continued. From time to time new courses were introduced. As the situation permitted, new departments were also added. The youngest of these is the department of Missions, which came formally into being in the year 1951. As matters now stand, a Bachelor of Divinity degree is awarded which is recognized by the chief accrediting agency in the country, the American Association of Theological

*An important part of the student's day  
is the morning chapel hour.  
Being a Christian College, Calvin  
is as much concerned  
with the students' spiritual growth as  
with their mental development.*



Schools. Since 1934 a Master of Theology degree has also been offered. Although the granting of a Doctor of Theology degree has, for sound reasons, been postponed, the hope of eventually reaching this goal is still a lively one.

Thus the School has shown some flexibility in meeting changing conditions. But perfection has not yet been attained. Once again, the curriculum is reaching the bursting point. In common with other seminaries in the nation, Calvin Seminary is finding it well-nigh impossible to include in three years all the courses which should be taught. But in wrestling with this problem, the faculty is seeking not only to make room for more courses, but to improve the quality of the instruction and bring it closer to the level of the classic conception of higher education.

We find ourselves part of the American scene in respect to these problems. The problems of other American seminaries are, in a sense, our problems also. Our answers to those problems, however, are not always exactly the same as the answers given by others. Calvin has never shunted doctrine to the sidelines and glorified the practical aspects of theology as so many other schools have done. This is to her credit. And in the face of the present bulging curriculum she is not content merely to surrender to the pressure for adding courses, but seeks to make the course of study ever more effective in making competent ministers of her students. One profitable practice, however, which was copied from other schools, was the introduction of summer field work, so that the students in their summer vacation periods might have practical contact with the kind of work for which they were preparing.

This is no claim that the seminary's task has been performed perfectly. The school labors under various kinds of difficulties. Some are common to the American educational scene. Others are imposed upon her by the Church's own position. Neither the broader aspects of the ministry nor the heights of theological learning have received the attention they deserve. Sometimes the close connection between Church and School has hampered the educational institution in

supplying that trail-blazing leadership which might be expected of her.

And yet the situation is not such that a blush of shame is called for. The Calvin graduate who goes on to work in other schools need not be ashamed of his training. Though he meets bigger names and bigger men, he discovers that he has been grounded in the classic Reformed position by men who themselves are committed to that position with a unified commitment.

The instruction in Calvin Seminary is geared to the pulpit and the parsonage. We have reaped some benefits from this. We have also experienced some ill effects. We do not, it seems, have an ample supply of outstandingly learned men to meet our needs. Nor, for some reason or reasons, is the production of theological works what it ought to be. These are shortcomings which call for serious consideration. Perhaps with God's blessing something can be done about this as time goes by.

The faculty which began with one professor in 1876 has been gradually expanded throughout the years. Two periods of expansion were the 1920's and the years following World War II. In the history of the Seminary, one period stands out for a sort of stability. In 1940 the faculty was composed of six professors, every one of whom had been in continuous service for at least twelve years. The greatest single symbol of continuity is Professor Louis Berkhof, who was professor from 1906 to 1944, and president from 1931 to 1944. These men, of whom we may take Prof. Berkhof as the symbol, have left an indelible mark on the Christian Reformed Church. At present, the faculty is composed of eleven full-time professors. Two are found in each of the following departments: Old Testament, New Testament, Dogmatics, and Practical Theology. Church History, Apologetics, and Missions employ the services of one man in each department. Dr. Martin Wyngaarden is at present the professor with the longest record of continuous service, having been Professor of Old Testament since 1924.

It would be hazardous indeed to characterize all of these men in a mere phrase or two.

Their gifts and abilities were varied. Perhaps the brightest theological light among them was Prof. Geerhardus Vos, who, after five years of service, left Calvin for a teaching position in Princeton Seminary. Some of these teachers were men of considerable education. Some were distinguished especially by their hold on the hearts of their students. The Church did not require of them an exceptional measure of brilliance. What the Church did demand, and what it got, was a hearty commitment to the Reformed position. What the Church gave in return was an esteem and honor of which these men felt themselves hardly worthy.

The expansion of the faculty has not always proceeded smoothly and without incident. Almost forty years ago a respected professor was dismissed without so much as a hint as to the reason. More than three decades ago, another professor was deposed for holding to the views of higher criticism. This was an event which created serious tensions in the Church for a time. A few years later another man was dismissed for irregularities in conduct. And in 1952 occurred an event without precedent in the annals of the School. Four professors were dismissed because of irreconcilable differences, particularly as to methodology. This is not the place to elaborate or speculate on the reasons for this action. All of the men involved have accepted the action with commendable grace. But Calvin Seminary is still feeling the effects of this upheaval today.

One adverse effect is that at present the average term of service of the professors is only seven and one half years; and with the retirement of some of the veteran teachers in the rather near future, this average will drop still further. Other difficulties arise out of the need for making hasty appointments. These events have made even greater the magnitude of the task which confronts the Seminary as the Church enters her second hundred years. If the School is to meet the challenge of increased contact with the American world, the needs imposed by expansion in Canada, and the insistent demands of higher theological standards, a rich measure of the grace of God is needed. God has never

forsaken this institution, dedicated to his glory, in the past. But today, as well as at any time in the past, the earnest and insistent prayers of those who love and depend on the School are much needed.

A faculty, of course, is not yet a complete seminary. A school needs also a student body. Like the faculty, the student body has been characterized by elements of change and growth within the framework of a character which has remained constant. The changes are less basic than the similarities. The beards and high collars of former years have made way for clean-shaven cheeks and sport shirts. But the students are still, as always, mostly sons of the Church; prepared for seminary in Calvin College; and men of a fair degree of maturity and devotion. Like students of any age, they are a little more impatient than other people with what seem to be glaring deficiencies, and a little more certain than others that the load of work is too heavy. They are men who, with all the assistance that the Church can give them, make a considerable financial sacrifice in their preparation for their life's task. These things have not changed.

Even some of the changes that have occurred have confirmed, rather than questioned, the basic character of the student body. The particularly current questions have changed from era to era. But our Seminary students have always been deeply concerned with the life of the Church in which they are to serve. The questions which the Church has asked in the course of her history have been their questions too. The current classes are insistently asking how the Christian Reformed Church may improve her witness to the world in which she is placed. There is growing interest in such aspects of the ministry as evangelization and the chaplaincy. These are evidences of a vital concern from which the Church may well derive satisfaction.

Over the course of eighty-one years, the average enrollment in the Seminary has been thirty-six, and the average graduating class twelve. The growth has been fairly steady. Up to 1889 the student body never exceeded nine. From 1890 to 1909 it fluctuated between



*This spacious cafeteria is the scene of a massive traffic-jam each morning during the daily coffee-rush.*

*The comfortable Commons lounge provides a pleasant meeting-place where students may relax or read between classes and at night.*



ten and thirty; from 1910 to 1924 between thirty and forty-five, from 1925 to 1939 between twenty-five and sixty. In 1949 the enrollment rose sharply to eighty-seven, and since that year it has never fallen below one hundred. The students are organized as the student Corps, with the Senate as the governing body. Through their five study clubs and the Choir they maintain an intellectual and social interest which carries advantages to all.

A building by itself is not a seminary. But a school needs a base of operations. The Church has kept pace with the needs of her Seminary in providing buildings. There was at first no building which could be designated as the Seminary building. With the formal beginning of the School, quarters were found on the upper floor of the Williams Street Christian School. These sufficed from 1876 to 1892.

By that time, however, more room was needed. The denomination rose to the occasion, and provided funds for the erection of a building on the corner of Madison and Franklin Streets in Grand Rapids. This was the home of the Theological School from 1892 to 1917. Later it became the home of the Grand Rapids Christian High School, and was recently razed to make room for the expansion and modernization of that school.

The third home of Calvin Seminary was erected in 1917. From the beginning it was shared by Calvin College. It is the present Administration Building of the College.

In 1930, thanks to the generosity of the Hekman families, Calvin Seminary moved into its own quarters. This is the fine building on the southwest corner of the Calvin campus which still houses the Seminary today.

And now it is proposed that the members of the Church shall erect a monument of gratitude to God for his century of favor to the Christian Reformed Church. This is to be a monument through which the whole Church speaks. It is intended to be an instrument through which the Church expresses her gratitude to God through living service for many years to come. What is more fitting than that this should be a Centennial Memo-



*The college bookstore is a scene of great activity for it is here that 1700 students obtain the tools to assist them in their studies. The bookstore serves both college and seminary.*

rial Seminary Building? For there is no institution whose activities are more intimately entwined with the spirit and welfare of the Church than this.

"Our School" our forefathers called it. It stands for the faith which they held dear. Among the seminaries of the land it has always stood without apology as a confessional Seminary, dedicated to the propagation of the faith as formulated in the creeds.

There are many problems which face this School. But the abiding grace of God, manifested through the abiding loyalty of his people, will be more than sufficient to meet these tests. Pray that Calvin Seminary may remain true to his Word; true to that Word with a faithfulness which constantly re-examines and seeks to improve its devotion. If this is accomplished, this school will always remain "our School" to those who love the Lord. Whatever aspirations we may have for Calvin Seminary, there is none dearer than this.

## A Growing Calvin College

By EARL STRIKWERDA and JOHN TIMMERMAN

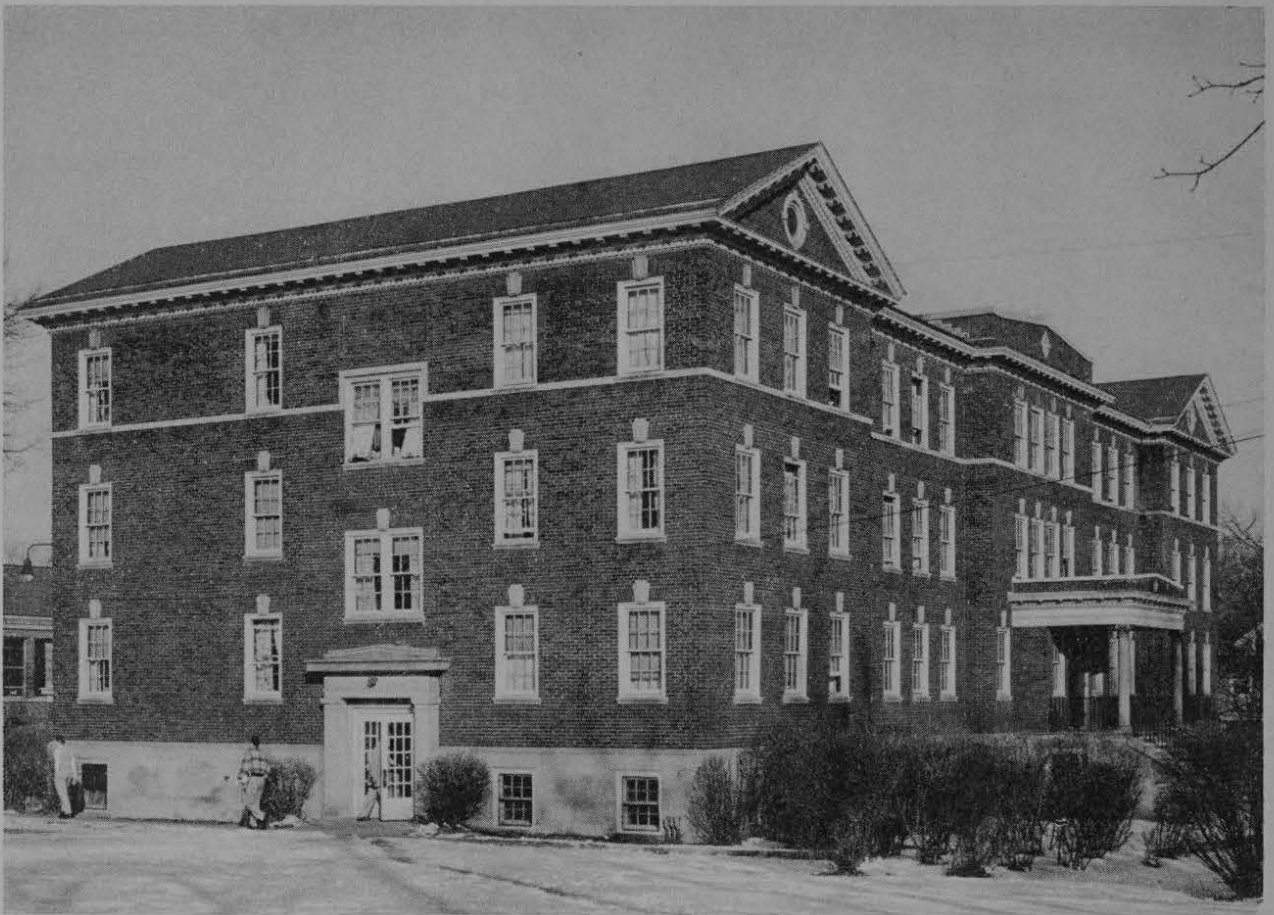
CALVIN COLLEGE, along with her sister, the Seminary, is a daughter of the Christian Reformed Church. And as the Church is comparatively young among Protestant denominations, so too the College is young in the world and in the sorority of schools of higher learning. But, though young – and therefore modest – Calvin College is strong and thriving. She is the envy of

other denominational schools, both for her academic vigor and for the ecclesiastical love and funds with which she is so generously endowed. This being true, may it always be evident that the College loves her Church and appreciates the spiritual and material favors which she bestows.

Calvin College was born on June 15, 1894, in response to a synodical decision to admit non-theological students to the Literary Department of the Seminary. But though the authorization was something simple, the implementation required more than two dec-

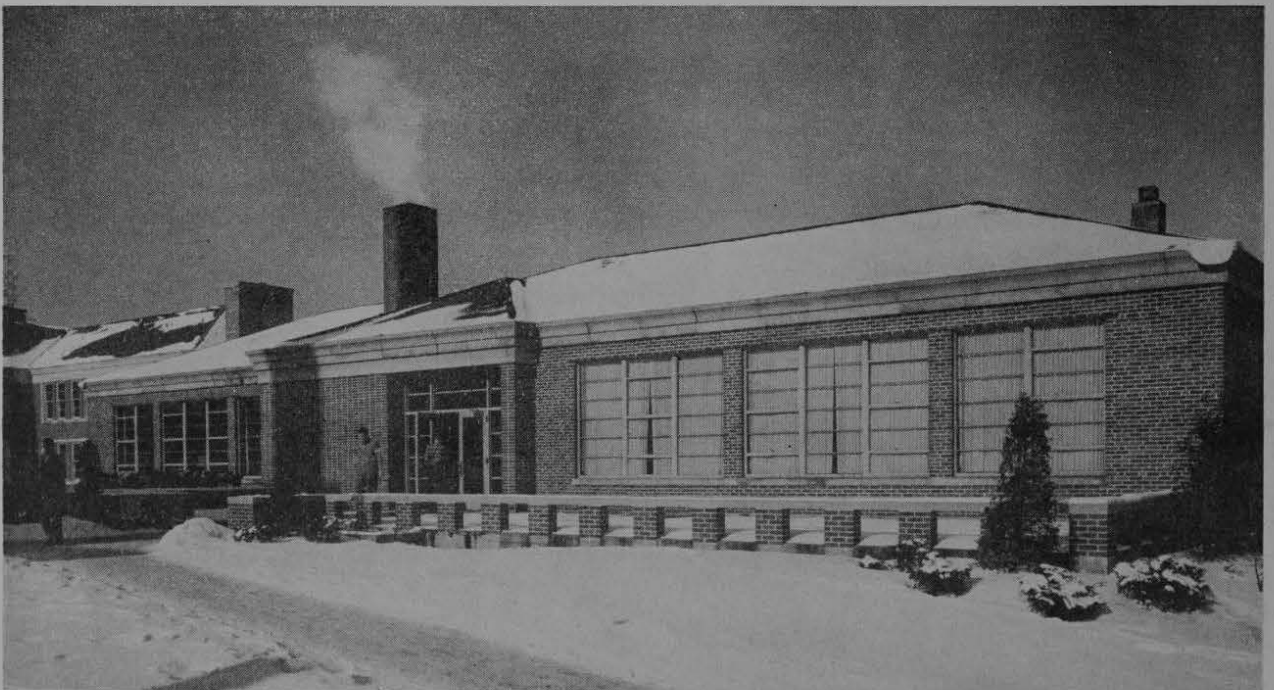
*Dominating the campus is the Administration Building which houses the administrative offices as well as classrooms and the college chapel.*





*The gymnasium and the student dispensary are found in the dormitory, located on the northeast corner of the campus. Built to house out-of-town students, it is very inadequate for present needs.*

*The newest building on the campus is the student Commons. Providing pleasant eating, lounging, and study facilities, this building fulfills a long-recognized need.*





ades. The transition from what was virtually only a senior high school to the rounding out of a junior college took until 1908. The transition from a junior college to the offering of a three-year course, which, when combined with the seminary course, led to the A.B. degree, required until 1914. And the offering of the A.B. by the college from within its own curriculum required until 1920. The first baccalaureates were given to eight young men in 1921.

An institution which proceeded so cautiously showed that it was no spurious affair. Calvin did not succumb to the temptation to advertise herself as something more than she actually was, as did scores of American small-town and hill-country institutions of those times. And this reluctance to claim herself to be more than she really was stays with us to this day. Calvin is in no hurry to offer a master's degree and therewith to call herself a university — something which is done by many an American institution. This sort of thing is akin to counterfeiting, and many are the American families which accept this coin when they send their youth to obscure graduate schools with inadequate resources. Rather, Calvin seeks to offer a reputable four-year course which stands up in an evaluation by professional schools; and in doing so she is being fair with her constituency, which does not readily understand these things.

Since 1920 Calvin has grown steadily and at times phenomenally, so that in 1957 various degrees or certificates of attendance were given to two hundred and ninety-seven young men and women. It is the growth which is represented by these figures that constitutes Calvin's blessing, her opportunity, but also her educational predicament. That growth has been apparent everywhere — in faculty, administration, student body, buildings, financial undergirding, and in her needs. Happily,

*The tremendous increase in enrollment has caused Calvin to outgrow its present facilities. Space in present buildings is taxed to capacity during peak periods in the day.*



*The Science Building, largest on the campus, is shared by the music and science departments. Built in 1949, it is primarily designed to train physicians, dentists, scientists and chemists.*

there has been a quantitative and qualitative expansion in the generosity of support from our sacrificing constituency.

The enormous increase in classroom teaching loads has both stimulated and challenged the faculty, whose expansion is not as rapid as that of the student body. Gone are the days and years when teaching and learning were intimate and comfortable. Faculty numerical growth tends to lag because of the competition of industry which offers better inducements to the good mind and because Calvin is highly selective and critical of prospective teaching personnel. Still, to sufficient numbers the challenge of working with eager students and the enjoyment of one another's friendship within the teaching family makes teaching at Calvin an attractive venture and way of life.

Over the years Calvin has been blessed with a succession of effective administrators gifted with the requisite piety, poise, and foresight. God has graciously given the College the right man at the right time. President Hiemenga's drive and vision, President Broene's wisdom and gentle concern, President Kuiper's bright common sense and steady humor, President Stob's geniality and drive, President Schultze's friendliness, and President Spoelhof's educational reach and architectural bent — all have guided us well

*Dissecting various types of animals and fish is standard procedure for students in the biological laboratories.*

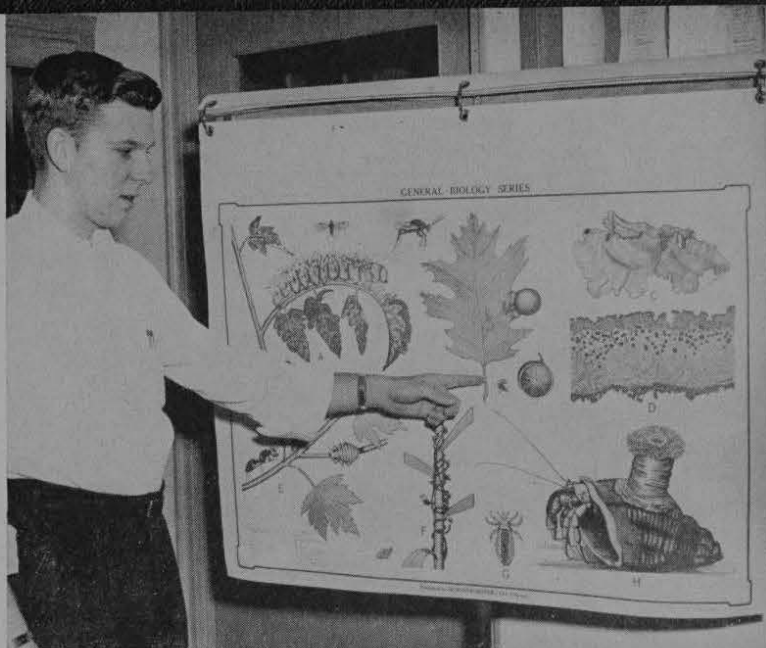


to this moment. And as to deans, we pause to pay deserved tribute to the effective groundwork of Albertus Rooks, the kindly wisdom of Henry Ryskamp, and the constant verve of Registrar Harry Dekker.

Whereas in 1917 the campus was unattractively bare with only one building standing squarely at its center — and this unadorned by bush or tree — the campus is today lovely with architecturally beautiful structures and a wide variety of trees and shrubs. Besides the original classroom structure, there are five fine buildings: the Men's Dormitory, which came as a gift in 1924 from the late Mr. Van Agthoven of Cincinnati; the Hekman Memorial Library in 1926 from the sons of Mrs. Edsko Hekman; the Seminary Building from the Hekman brothers in 1927; the grand Science Building, built in 1952 with the cash gifts of our people; and the indispensable Student Commons, again a gift from the people of the Church, completed in 1953.

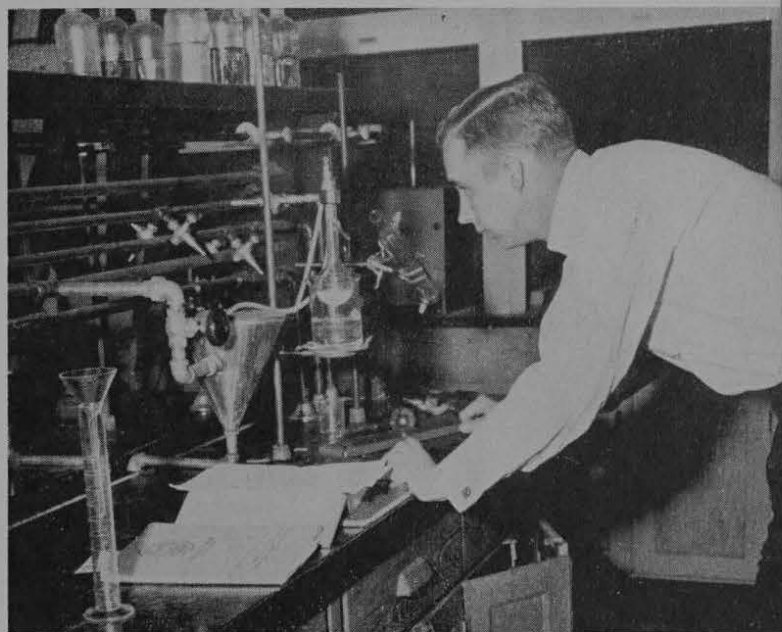
The erection of the Seminary Building gave the College sole occupancy of the Administration Building, and the physical separation of the two faculties made possible more convenience in the hours of teaching and the spacing of classes. But it also practically ended the more intimate daily interfaculty fraternization — something which was regrettable. Fortunately, however, this happenstance was partially compensated for with the coming of the Commons in 1953, which made it possible for the two faculties to again mingle and match viewpoints during the teaching "breaks" in the school day.

Since World War II the College has acquired properties apart from the original campus, though mostly contiguous to it. Ten so-called guild houses were purchased as living quarters for small self-governing groups of women students. These are operated on a long-term self-liquidating arrangement. Also seven and one-half acres of land were purchased about one block east of the present campus — this with a view to erecting needed buildings there. It was this acreage that was about to be utilized when the administration saw that the plot would be vastly inadequate to our long-term needs. Thus it was that Knollcrest Farms were purchased



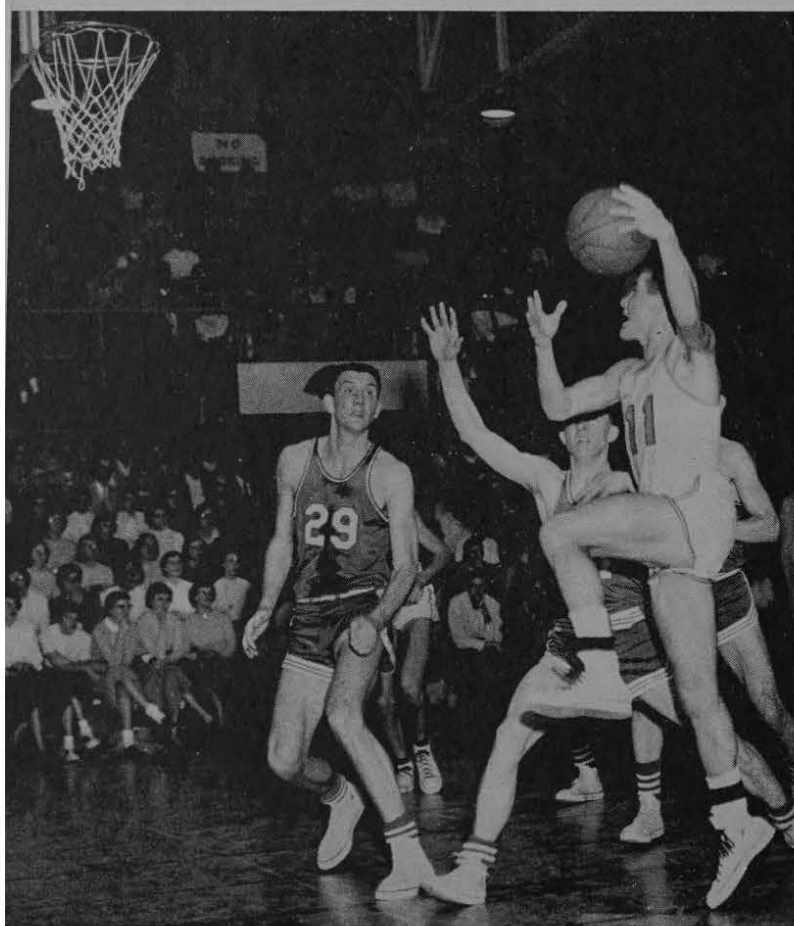
*In addition to field trips in which botany students study an amazing variety of foliage, much time is spent in the laboratory study and analysis of species.*

*The chemistry labs at Calvin College are well equipped with modern facilities. Many Calvin graduates leaving these laboratories gain high recognition in the fields of medicine, chemistry and physics.*





*In the day to day classroom activity, courses come to life through the interesting lectures of competent professors. At present, Calvin has seventy-six active and 10 emeritus personnel on their teaching staff.*



*Calvin's basketball teams have achieved a prominent position in the MIAA circles. On several occasions they have been named league champions.*

*Included in the Science Building is the dietetic department, where student-nurses gain valuable experience by working in modern, fully equipped kitchens.*





*The newly acquired property at Knollcrest Farm is perhaps best identified by the long sloping lawns leading to the English Manor House.*

by the Synod of 1956. A year later the Centennial Synod decided that all future expansion should be on this lovely site.

Our College has grown out of a steadily moving dream — a dream which projected itself far ahead of the actualities of any given time. That dream is still being dreamed by scores of men and women, professional and lay, who are concerned about God-centered education in a materialistic world and culture. To effect even a partial realization of their vision and ours and to implant it in the minds of hundreds of our graduates each year



demands an all-out effort on the part of the trustees, the administrative officers, and the faculty.

Calvin cannot project herself very far into the foreseeable future unless she is given more of that which she already has. God will have to provide additional competent and consecrated teachers — many of them. Only then, and with God's help, can we as teachers offer added stimulus to our gifted students, most of whom go into brilliant graduate and professional careers. Similarly, we shall have to give more patient and time-consuming help to the less gifted incoming freshmen who are entrusted to our care by serious and concerned Christian parents. Too, Calvin will have to allow more opportunity for research and for that kind of unsung scholarship in which the ordinary teacher engages in order to remain lively and interesting in his classes. Calvin wants eagerly to project her Calvinistic convictions into a non-Christian culture. Calvin is eager to work harder and longer. No one knows this better than its administration and its faculty.

To these ends Calvin abundantly needs the blessing of God and the sacrificial devotion of its supporters — supporters who have known for decades that the faith of the fathers is strongest and most forceful where

*Included in the picturesque estate  
is an artificial lake  
surrounded by beautiful willow trees.*

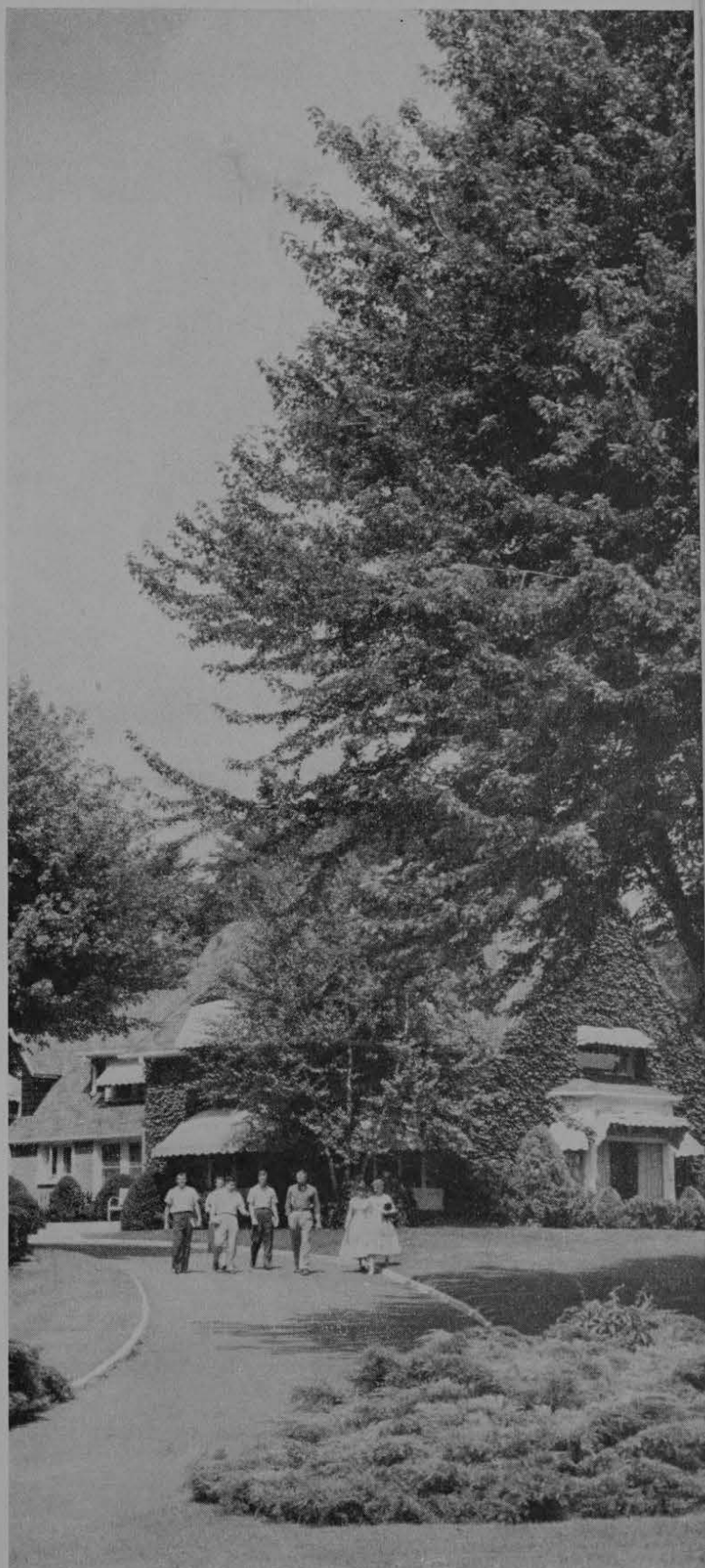
it is mature and properly cultured, rather than narrow and unlettered.

Does Calvin as a cause deserve such blessings? If one looks at the past, it would surely seem so. Hundreds of consecrated ministers, hundreds of indispensable Christian teachers, hundreds upon hundreds of liberally educated mothers, hundreds of business and professional leaders — all these have entered upon their walks of life. Calvin's graduates have done consistently and uniformly well, particularly in the better universities, and many of Calvin's sons serve on such faculties. All have brought honor to her name and respectability to the Reformed outlook and tradition.

Because of her past, because of her beckoning future, and because of the confidence of the common Reformed man, which is her finest treasure, Calvin wants to be keenly effective so that she can unhesitatingly and honestly accept the sons and daughters of the Church and then after a few years proudly turn them back into the workaday world with a reputable degree and with a faith that is embedded in the Rock of Ages. May God so bless her that she may continue to serve her Church, her country, and her God!

*... loyal ever to the faith of old  
God's name and honor we ever shall  
uphold.*

*Tomorrow's students can  
look forward with eager anticipation  
to the new Calvin College Campus.*





*It is significant that this momentous decision to purchase the Knollcrest property should have been made in this our church's Centennial year.*

*One hundred sixty-six acres of rolling hills, landscaped lawns, woods, and pastures comprise the new campus site.*



# HOME MISSIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA



*An outdoor meeting in Harlem, New York City,  
typifies our new frontiers  
in home missions and evangelism.*



## Home Missions in the United States and Canada

By REV. J. M. VANDE KIEFT

### Centennial Slant

THE YEAR of our Lord 1957 will be marked in the history of the Christian Reformed Church as its Centennial Year. The central theme of our Centennial celebration, as expressed in the words, "God's Favor is our Challenge," applies also to Home Missions, according to the analysis given by the Centennial Committee, in words that call for energetic action: "to increase the scope of evangelism at home and abroad." This means that the Christian Reformed Church is committed to the inclusion of Home or Domestic as well as Foreign Missions in its program as essential to the very life and growth of the Christian Church Universal. It reveals an attitude of responsive obedience to the loving purpose of our Triune God, restated after his resurrection by Christ, the Savior of the world and the Lord of Glory in these ringing words: "But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." In this charge is the divine prediction of the spread of the gospel on a world-encircling scale. In our day and generation we are called to participate and to fulfil our share of the great redemptive purposes of God according to Christ's missionary mandate to his New Testament Church.

Some years ago Dr. Henry Beets, Director of Missions and veteran historian of the

Christian Reformed Church, greatly beloved and high in the esteem of his Church, celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination to the Christian ministry by writing a history of the Church which he loved and had served so well. That history vividly portrays its beginnings and rootage, its struggles and vicissitudes, its growth from its childhood and coming to majority during a century of time in this agitated and perilous

*The neighborhood chapel — neat, trim, inviting — has become the symbol of Christian Reformed community work and church extension throughout the land. (This is Bluffton Chapel, near Muskegon, Mich.)*





*In rural communities, as well as city neighborhoods, modest, unadorned structures set a pattern of simplicity. In some instances remodeled houses were used. Above: Grace and Hope Chapels, Muskegon, Mich.; Knollwood Chapel and a Sunday School station, Kalamazoo, Mich.*

machine-age. The record is interesting and instructive if we in this generation are still willing to learn from those who have preceded us. The author has soberly taken stock, restraining the common human tendency to magnify the virtues and accomplishments while minimizing the faults and failures which will all be manifested and accounted for in the last day.

In that day it will be noted that the Christian Reformed Church was not one of the big denominations, with a membership of millions and its denominational program conceived and executed on a grand scale with cathedrals and churches of magnificent splendor. In the eyes of the Lord who searches the hearts, the babes in Christ, the minority and the little ones, are not despised. He measures his Church by the standard of faithfulness and fruitfulness. During the checkered course of its history the Christian Reformed Church has maintained its spiritual identity rooted and grounded in the faith. It has aspired to no lesser aim than to be faithful unto him who is himself the Faithful and True, the same yesterday, today, yea, and forever. God's favor is our challenge; our story is unto his glory.

### **The Twofold Home Mission Objectives**

The missionary task of sowing and reaping in the Lord's harvest requires vision and perspective. The objectives must be defined in harmony with missionary principles and directives given in the Holy Scriptures. This is in line with Reformed Evangelism and Reformed Church Extension. It is well to keep this twofold objective together as correlated and integrated activities in the home mission program. This is indicated by the example of our Lord and his apostles. Jesus evangelized in person, preaching the gospel of good tidings unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He gave the assurance that there were other sheep which he would also bring into his fold. At the same time he set his objective upon building and extending his Church: "upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). Both these aspects of the Home Mission objective and

program are embraced in his Messianic claim of the full and complete harvest: "and this is the will of him that sent me, that of all those given unto me I shall lose nothing but raise them all up at the last day" (John 6:39). Missions is the proclamation in time of the redemptive purpose of God according to his eternal Counsel of Peace. This includes the spread of the gospel, the gathering of his church and the extension of his Kingdom.

The rich harvest of souls that followed Peter's preaching on the Day of Pentecost was not due to the forcefulness of the preacher but to the power of the Holy Spirit poured out from heaven. "And the Lord added to them day by day those that were saved." The churches as well as the membership increased. The converts of evangelism — penitent, believing, and confessing — were gladly received and incorporated into the churches that were established at the Lord's high command.

In the light of the above emphasis on the twofold primary objective of Home Missions it is interesting to mark the same stress laid upon this unification in the Report to Synod submitted by the General Committee for Home Missions for the year 1956 (Agenda, page 76). There the Committee requests Synod: "a. That we no longer make a distinction between Church Extension in the U.S. and Canada.

*"Grounds:*

"1) The special emergency status of our Canadian field no longer exists.

"2) Our churches in the U.S. and Canada constitute the one Christian Reformed Church of America.

"3) Continuance of the distinction implies the existence of two separate, though closely related, ecclesiastical groups.

"b. That the monies in the two funds — Church Extension in the U.S. and Church Extension in Canada—be placed in one Fund.

"c. That this fund be henceforth designated as Fund for Evangelism and Church Extension.

*"Grounds:*

"1) Evangelism and Church Extension are inseparably related. Evangelism, Scripturally conceived of, promotes church extension



*Most chapels are projects of individual congregations. In established fields, more substantial buildings pave the way for new churches, or consolidate city mission work. Shown are Allen Road, Arcadia, and Madison Square Chapels, three of more than thirty such in the Grand Rapids area.*



*In many varied communities of the midwest — college towns, rural areas, industrial centers — chapels appeared. Shown here, top to bottom: Champaign-Urbana, Ill.; Beacon Light Chapel, Racine, Wis.; Lake Andes, So. Dak.; and Community Chapel, Hammond, Ind.*

and Church Extension, Scripturally conceived of, promotes evangelism.

"2) The two interrelated activities of Home Missions, namely Evangelism and Church Extension, have been and are maintained by the financial resources of the same fund.

This change of name and merging of funds is a recognition of unity of purpose and harmony of primary objectives in the great Home Mission field of the Church. As if in proof that this does not mean a curtailment or recession in the program, the next request is for the opening of new fields: "Synodical permission to open ten new fields in 1957, if and when exploratory surveys warrant, is requested." Synod granted all four requests in the spirit of the Centennial year. There is urgency in the harvest call. At this juncture it is relevant and fitting that I direct your attention to a final report submitted by the Rev. Adam Persenaire as one of our first missionaries in Canada. He reports: "With the writing of this last report I have finished my task as a home-missionary. It is with regret that I leave the work which I was privileged to do for eight and a half years, and which I have always enjoyed immensely. Looking back on the years that have sped by, my heart is filled with gratitude for the signal blessings which the Lord gave upon my labors.

"Rev. Spoelhof and I were the first missionaries to go to Canada after the Second World War. We were permitted to see the unparalleled growth of our Church in this Northland. But perhaps there was no other district wherein the development was more phenomenal than in the Niagara Peninsula. When I came here in January, 1948, there was but one small congregation in the city of Hamilton. For 20 years it had eked out a struggling existence, being heavily subsidized during all that time. Its small and dilapidated church building was still encumbered with a heavy debt. Yet it was to the credit of the small band of faithful "old" immigrants, as we are accustomed to call them, that this church had maintained itself at all in this lonely outpost. Many others who formerly had been associated with them long ago had

lost interest in the Reformed faith, and had succumbed to the influence of their environment.

"But what a change after eight years! Now Hamilton has become the largest church of our denomination in Canada, and the hub of our church-life in the whole province of Ontario. (Toronto might want to dispute this claim). It has a beautiful church edifice, and has become the mother of a number of daughter congregations in its immediate vicinity, such as, Mt. Hamilton, Fruitland, Burlington, and Calvin Church of Greenville. But, not only did the Hamilton congregation grow and multiply; also in the whole Niagara Peninsula churches sprang up on every side. The first of these were St. Catharines and Jarvis. Then followed Brantford. Again, the church of St. Catharines, only two years after its organization, mothered two daughter congregations, namely, Wellandport and Niagara Falls-Stamford. Most of these congregations may now be numbered among the large churches and are wholly self-supporting. And even though the immigration movement has greatly slackened in its pace, yet it can be expected that in the near future several more congregations will have to be organized in the Niagara Peninsula. Even now, St. Catharines has over 200 families; and Jarvis, with its 140 families, housed in a church that seats only 500 persons, may soon have to release some of its membership to start a new congregation in Simcoe. Wellandport also is already wondering whether it should not initiate work in Port Colborne or Dunnville, and thus make room for another new congregation. Even Hamilton is again over-crowded, and may soon become a mother once more."

Thus far the final report of Home Missionary Adam Persenaire which gives us an insight as well as an oversight of his fields and work. Due to the nature of our Canadian field, the work of the Home Missionaries there is mostly that of church extension at this stage of their development as immigrant fellow-believers. In our United States fields there is more emphasis on the aspect of evangelism among the unchurched and unsaved. This too has its special problems and difficul-



*In distant resort centers and the suburbs of larger cities, chapels and services arose. Above, a chapel at St. Petersburg, Fla.; services at Bradenton, Fla.; a striking new church in Philadelphia, and a young people's Bible hour at Palos Heights, Ill.*

ties as well as its blessings and fruits to gladden the hearts of the faithful laborers. What place have they in the hearts and prayers of the churches at home?

### **The Extent and Scope of the Home Mission Field**

This is an inviting phase of our subject that opens up vistas with far horizons. In view of space limitations, statistics rather than descriptive survey will be employed to show our post-war expansion and growth from the year 1945 to 1956.

1945

19 Classes in the U.S.A.

None in Canada

311 Congregations

14 in Canada

264 Ministers

129,979 Total Membership (souls)

1956

26 Classes — plus 2 in formation —  
9 in Canada

481 Congregations

112 in Canada — largely fruit of  
Church Extension

406 Ministers plus 50 full-time Lay Evangelists and a growing number of Associate Ministers of Evangelism

204,621 Total Membership

Only the Lord of the harvest has the complete and accurate role of converts whose names he has written in the Book of Life.

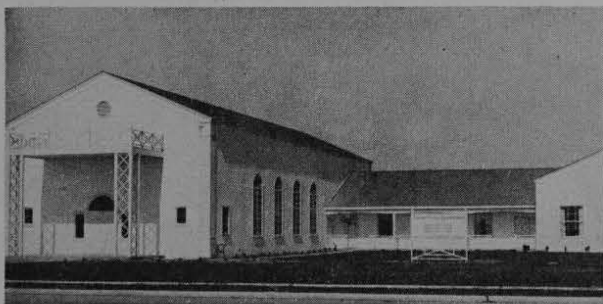
The outreach of the field is now co-extensive with the Canadian provinces, from Charlottetown in Prince Edward Island to Vancouver and Victoria in British Columbia. And in the United States it extends from the Eastern to the Western Seaboard, from New York to Florida, and from San Diego to Alaska.

In occupying our part of this vast mission field the Lord has set open doors before us while Satan, the adversary, has contested every foot of advance.

In the great cosmopolitan cities of New York and Chicago we were confronted with the racial and color line. Home Missionary Eugene S. Callender, ably assisted by the Misses Elsie Koop and Marjorie Visser, are



*To the Rockies and beyond to the west coast, home missions and church extension blazed a trail. Pictured above are the Gospel Chapel at Denver, Colo., and chapels at Tucson, Ariz., San Jose, Calif., and Albuquerque.*



*In far-off Alaska and other outposts, home missions serves servicemen and settlers, immigrants and the original Americans. Top to bottom, the chapel at Anchorage, Alaska; Service Home at Alameda, Calif.; the Chinese Gospel Church in Chicago, and church at Lakewood, Calif.*

establishing a Parish Community with intensive evangelism in the heart of Harlem. They are finding appalling ignorance of the gospel and living conditions described as living and laboring in a "city jungle" among "city pagans" of whom there are countless numbers in our big cities.

A full program of calling, preaching, and teaching, with the aid of Sunday and Daily Vacation Bible School, is being inaugurated as soon as the re-modeled building is ready for occupancy. Since this project combines the parish method of evangelism with that of the indigenous church there is no problem here in receiving the converts into the church membership and fellowship.

In Chicago there is expectation on the part of our Consistories and Classes to undertake a denominational-integrated home mission program among the Negroes in the Lawndale district. This district was formerly in the main a Jewish neighborhood. The Nathanael Institute, over a period of many years, has carried on its evangelistic witness among Israel's lost sheep. In consequence of this migratory movement and the influx of the Negroes into the area, consideration and planning are being given to relocating and reorganizing the work of the Nathanael Institute. The Paterson Jewish Mission likewise is relocating and being integrated into the denominational Home Mission Committee program.

Both in New York and in Chicago home mission work is in progress among the Chinese. The Lord has led the Christian Reformed Church to hear the plea and to respond to the challenge presented to it by Mr. Paul Szto and family in New York City and by the Rev. Isaac Jen with his family in Chicago to become citizens of this country and citizens of a better country and fellow-members of our Christian Reformed Church. They too are an open door set before us that we might reach the people belonging to another race and country, now providentially seeking refuge and a new home in our land — the same people whom we could no longer reach with the gospel within their own country. Thus the Lord opens new doors when the adversary closes the old. Again God's

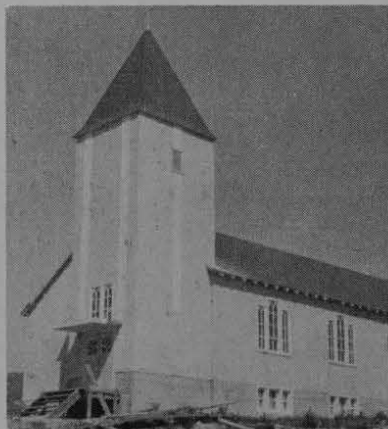
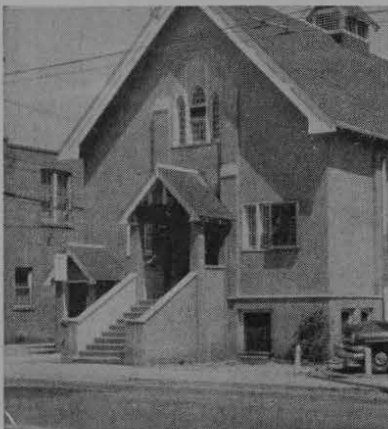
favor is our challenge to send forth workers into his vineyard and to pray and give in order that this blessed work may continue and bear much fruit. The denominational financial support is rendered largely through the Church Extension Fund with its budget and quota. This is freely augmented by generous calling churches which provide the salary in whole or in part.

Smaller churches unable to pay the full salary of their ministers and those in need of financial aid for building purposes receive similar help from the Fund for Needy Churches and the Church Help Fund respectively. The beneficiaries of these several funds can testify with gratitude to God how much these favors have meant to them in the communion of saints.

During the years of the Great Depression, when all funds were low and when struggling churches were unable to call and candidates for the ministry were left waiting in vain for a call, Synod appointed a special *Emergency*

*Committee* working jointly with the Home Mission Committee to remedy this sad situation. This Committee was effective to a considerable extent in meeting the emergency, although both the problem and its solution were abnormal. It would seem to be the normal law of development in the increase and growth of churches that in each generation and era there be a sufficient number of trained ministers and missionaries to meet the demand of the churches and mission fields. Likewise there should be an adequate number of churches established, and of mission fields opened, to supply all the candidates with a field of labor as co-workers with Christ. The fields must be adequately staffed

*In the decade following World War II, the greatest task of home missions was in Canada, to assist in establishing churches among the many thousands of Dutch immigrants. New churches sprouted all over the Dominion, such as these at Emo, Ont., and Taber, Alta., and (below), Calgary and Medicine Hat, Alta., and Saskatoon, Sask.*



and provided with proper facilities. And withal, the fruits and the favor of blessing must come from the Lord himself. There must be a dedication of ourselves, our sons and our daughters, our money and our prayers, to the great trust committed unto us.

The time is rapidly shortening. The days are increasingly evil. Lt. Gen. James M. Gavin was called to testify recently before a Senate Investigating Committee as to the comparative strength of our defense forces and weapons and those of Soviet Russia in case of war. He shocked the Committee, and the nations which heard or read his words, when he declared that without a doubt "several hundred millions of deaths (this is more

than all the Russians) would follow if an all-out nuclear war would be waged against Russia." We shudder at the unstable and unpredictable state of the peace of the world.

The one and only Hope of the world and of all nations and people is the Christ of God who once died on the Cross, was raised again, and is now reigning on the Throne. He holds the destiny and the future of all nations and peoples in his almighty hands.

Let us not cease to evangelize, *Until He Comes!* Let us extend his Church, mindful of his promise: "Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."

*Proclaim to every people, tongue and nation  
That God in whom they live and move is  
love.*

*Tell how he stooped to save his lost creation,  
And died on earth that man might live above.  
Publish glad tidings; Tidings of peace; Tid-  
ings of Jesus,  
Redemption and release!*

*The wave of settlers from The Netherlands soon spread westward from Ontario to all the Provinces, all the way across to the Pacific. Here are chapels and churches at Rocky Mountain House, Iron Springs, High River, and Vauxhall, Alberta.*



## The Back to God Hour

By HAROLD PALS

ON SUNDAY, December 15, 1957, the Christian Reformed Church will begin its 19th year of radio broadcasting. It is difficult to believe that nearly a score of years has passed since the first broadcast was heard on December 17, 1939. Or, to put it another way, nearly one-fifth of our Church's history includes the history of the Back to God Hour. Since a Centennial is always a time for retrospect, let's review briefly the history of our broadcast.

In dating its origin we must return to 1928, for at that Synod the first Radio Committee was appointed, consisting of Rev. Henry Verduin, Rev. Isaac Westra, Rev. James M. Ghysels, Rev. Leonard Trap and Mr. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Sr. Overtures from Classis Grand Rapids East, Grand Rapids West, and Illinois underlined the fact that there was already considerable interest in preaching the Word of God by radio. It was being done on the Classical level at the time, and although the above-named Committee recommended to the Synod of 1930 that "Synod make radio preaching denomina-

tional," it was decided "that we leave radio preaching to the local initiative of the various Classes." And here it remained until 1937.

In 1938 the Executive Committee of the Home Missions Board devoted several paragraphs of its report to Synod to the importance of radio broadcasting, while Classis Pella overtured to begin broadcasting on a national scale. Synod responded by appointing a study Committee including Rev. Dick H. Walters, Rev. Edward B. Pekelder, Rev. Benjamin Essenberg, Rev. Henry Baker and Messrs. Jacob De Jager and Mark Fakkema. After a year of investigation, these men proposed that a 26-week period of time be purchased on one of the large radio stations and "that this half-hour shall be known as 'The Back to God Hour.'" This was adopted and the first broadcast was heard on December 17, 1939, over station WJJD, Chicago.

Until 1941 the program was financed by special offerings, but since the number of stations had now increased to 9, the Back to God Hour was included in the denominational budget. The musical part of the program was enhanced by the renditions of the Calvin College Choir under the direction of Prof. Seymour Swets.

*From this headquarters building of the Back to God Hour in Chicago, hundreds of thousands of pieces of printed literature go out each month to supplement the radio voice. All administration activities and correspondence are handled here.*



Whereas station contracts had run for 13 or 26 weeks previously, in 1943 a 52-week contract was signed with 9 stations. The Radio Committee was determined to move forward, as is evident from these excerpts from the Acts of Synod: "Over against present-day systems such as modernism, Communism, materialism, etc., we should place our dynamic, militant, Calvinistic system of thought and life"; and again, "The aim should be to bring our distinctive truths to the American people in the light of our Reformed Confessions as they relate to the church, home, state, and society."

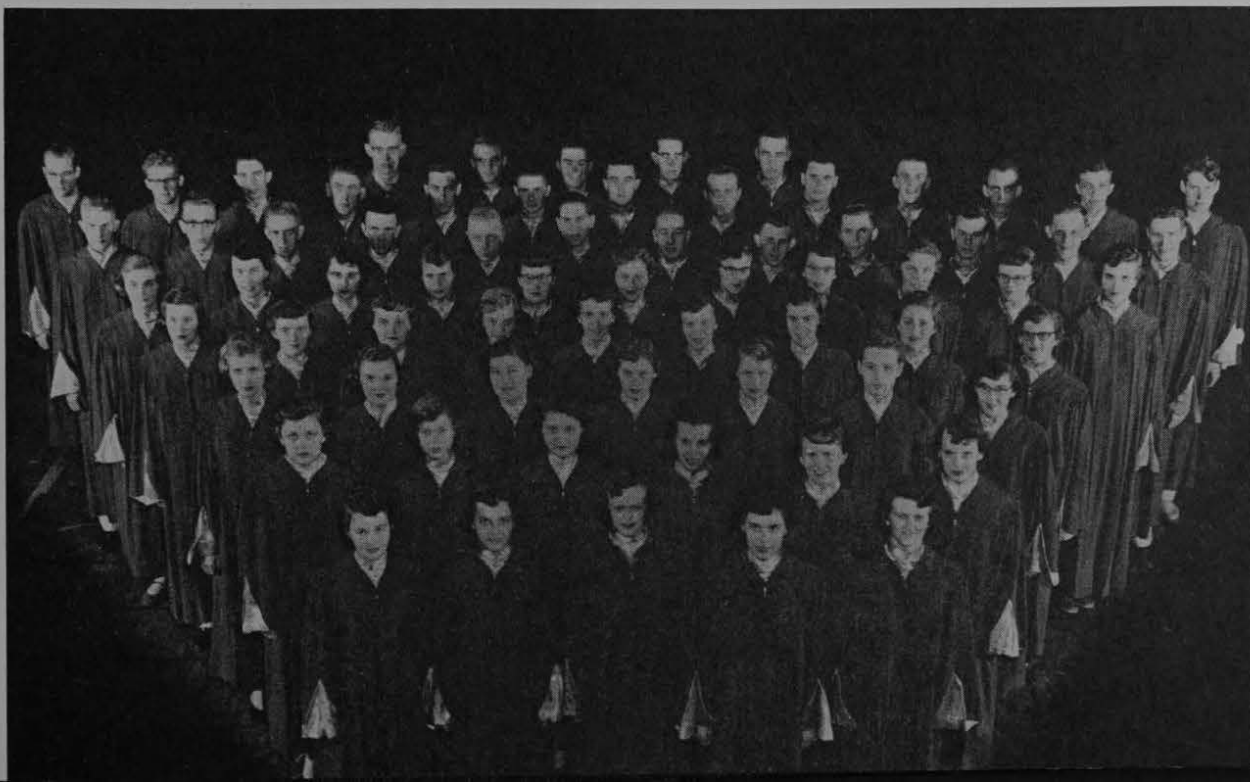
By 1945, 18 stations were carrying the program each week and "follow-up" work was initiated in cooperation with the Home Missions Board. Prof. Henry Schultze had been designated as speaker for most of the regular season, but unfortunately he became ill and could not continue. (Incidentally, more than 40 ministers of our Church have been heard on our broadcast to date.)

The ideal of a full-time radio minister was realized in 1946 when Rev. Peter Eldersveld was led to accept the challenge presented in his appointment by Synod. The services of a reputable advertising agency, Stoetzel and Associates, were engaged to handle station relations and contracts, advertising, publicity,

etc. And our relationship to this agency was unique in that Mr. Ralph Rozema, a well-known figure in our denomination, was (and still is) an executive of the firm.

The year 1947 proved to be a particularly significant year because on December 7 the broadcast was heard for the first time over the Mutual Broadcasting System network. This was indeed a memorable moment, for it put our program within the hearing range of millions of Americans and mail response tripled almost overnight. Moreover, Prof. James De Jonge of Calvin College was appointed music director, and he immediately organized a choir of Calvin students and began training them for specialized radio work. Since then thousands of listeners have written to tell us how they have been blessed by the singing as well as the preaching of the Word of God. Mr. Carroll Marts, a Mutual Broadcasting System executive, said to the Choir just before their first network broadcast: "More people will hear you within the next half-hour than ever heard Enrico Caruso, the world-famous Italian tenor, in his whole lifetime." The spirit of thanksgiving in the whole Church was appropriately voiced in this excerpt from the Acts of Synod: "What hath God wrought! Thanks be to Him for opened doors!" The broadcast was now being heard over 300 stations, including one in Shanghai, China, our first out-

*The Calvin College Radio Choir of the Back to God Hour, heard on each broadcast, is specially trained for its task, has earned an enviable reputation on the networks.*



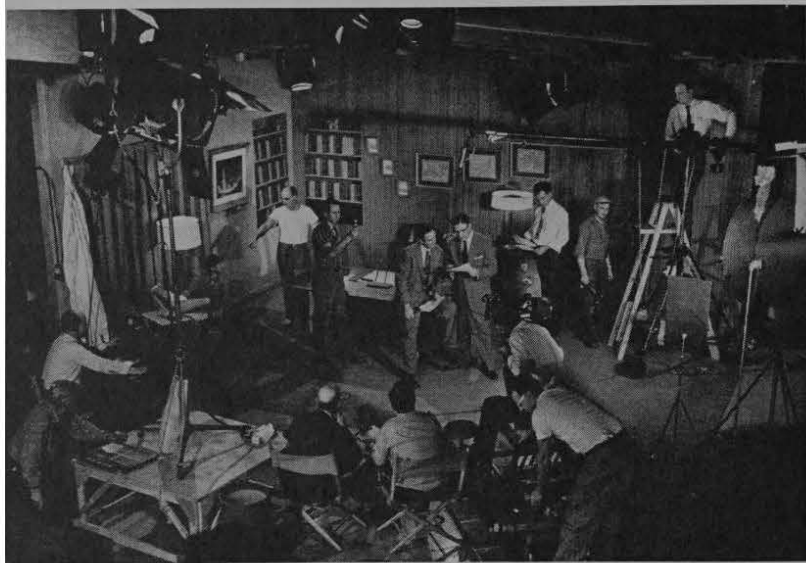
MR. A. R. WALCOTT  
SIBBS AUDETTE  
DEARBORN, MICH. 48124

let abroad, which was later closed by the Communists.

While more than 30,000 copies of the radio sermons were being mailed out weekly, our radio minister in reading the mail discovered the need for a devotional booklet to be used in the home for family worship, — something which would minister to the daily spiritual needs of the average listener. Thus the *Family Altar* was born, and such a deluge of mail resulted in response to our offer on the radio that within a few months 40,000 homes were



Thousands of listeners write in, some to ask questions, others for copies of the radio sermons. Some 85,000 copies of *The Family Altar*, daily devotional booklet, are sent out each month.



Preparing for a TV broadcast in a network studio requires much preparation, equipment, trained personnel.

The mailing room in the *Back to God Hour* building is a busy ministry-by-mail.



on our mailing list. Some 83,000 copies are now sent out each month to individual homes as well as to numerous churches outside our denomination, whose pastors distribute them gratefully. Unquestionably, it has filled a great need.

In 1951 Rev. Harold Dekker accepted an appointment to serve as Minister of Radio Evangelism. He concentrated on "follow-up" work, instituted the literature service, and also served as summer guest speaker. Bible courses for home study were provided; a new magazine, *The Listener's Digest*, was published to present select articles on a variety of subjects, and doctrinal pamphlets were prepared. The *Reader's Guide* was published and the books listed in it were made available through our office. Important fields of evangelism were opened up as a direct result of the broadcast. Among them are Albuquerque, New Mexico; Salt Lake City, Utah; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Champaign-Urbana, Illinois; Columbus, Ohio; and Harlem in New York City. Listeners were thus brought the Word of God each Sunday, not only through the broadcast, but also through the Mission chapel and organized Church.

Since 1951 several events stand out among all the others. Through the kindness of the

late Mr. Dick Van Eck, a member of the First Christian Reformed Church of Rose-land, Chicago, the Back to God Hour received a very substantial legacy in the form of a large two-story brick building. Our offices are housed in this building and there is ample room for expansion. This fine gift met a very crucial need, and we are deeply grateful for the spirit that prompted it.

We have also made a significant beginning in the field of television. More than 150 stations have already shown our first 13-week film series on the Ten Commandments, and they have done it on free time. Had it been necessary to purchase this time, the cost would have been nearly \$200,000. The second series, on the Lord's Prayer, is now in production and will be on the air during our Centennial year.

In view of the fact that our program has grown to such large proportions, the Radio Committee felt the need of appointing a Business Manager to work with the Radio Minister and assist him in handling the many additional duties resulting from this growth. Mr. C. J. den Dulk, formerly of Ripon, California, received and accepted this appointment and began his work on January 1, 1955.

Our program has been heard for the past few years over HCJB in Quito, Ecuador, through the kindness of a member of one of our Michigan churches. Moreover, the Holland-Zeeland Young Calvinist League made it possible to put our program on station HOXO in Panama. These broadcasts have proved very valuable, not only in terms of response, but also in making us aware of the peculiar spiritual problems we face in bringing the Word of God to foreign peoples. We have a real responsibility toward them, and we fervently pray that God will make us equal to this new challenge. The matter of foreign broadcasting has been discussed almost yearly at our Synods and the Synod of 1956 decided to begin broadcasting over several additional foreign stations, such as DZAS in the Philippines, ELWA in Liberia, GOA on the island of Goa (near India) and WRUL in Boston, which is beamed shortwave to Europe. This new expansion of our broadcast, a significant step of progress in our

Centennial year as a Church, will mean a much larger witness for the Church, even reaching areas of this earth which are virtually closed to the Gospel except by way of radio.

Any chronology of the Back to God Hour would hardly be complete if we failed to mention the anxiety we experienced upon hearing that Mr. Eldersveld had suffered a severe heart attack on September 27, 1955, just as he was beginning his tenth year as minister and director of the Back to God Hour. We are grateful to God for sparing him and permitting him to carry on his work again. His vision, concern for the cause, and devotion to his work have always been an inspiration to those directly engaged in this work with him. Most admirable of all is his determination to bring the whole counsel of God without compromise to our vast audience. That our audience admires him became particularly evident at the time of his illness when thousands wrote to express their concern and assure us of their prayers on his behalf.

And so as we look back we can surely thank God for 18 years of his blessing upon our broadcast. One could hardly select a similar period of history that was more eventful for this world and more in need of the gospel of divine grace. In this Centennial year, we are humbly thankful that as a Church we may strive to obey the great commission of our Lord, and particularly that we may be used by him in radio and television, at home and abroad, to "preach from the housetops what we have heard in the ear."

## Later but Not Least

(Neighborhood Evangelism during  
the Century)

By D. H. WALTERS

**A**N OLD HYMN, written in 1840, voiced the opportunity and challenge of that day in these lines:

"We are living, we are dwelling,  
In a grand and awful time,  
In an age on ages telling,  
To be living is sublime!  
On, let all the soul within you  
For the truth's sake go abroad;  
Strike, let every nerve and sinew  
Tell on ages, tell for God."

If that day was a "grand and awful time," how much more can our age be so called. That was written before our Christian Reformed history began, but we can testify that during "our century" we have been "telling for God."

Evangelism, as we interpret the term today in our Christian Reformed circles was not found in the early history, nor in the consciousness of the Church. The one note that is repeatedly sounded in the early history of our Church is that of "preservation." The Hollanders who came to America and settled in our colony areas had ringing in their ears the familiar words, "In your isolation lies your strength." They carried to these shores few earthly possessions, but spiritually they had an investment, a heritage to be protected and cherished. Scattered abroad over this great country, theirs was a God-given duty to preserve and keep. This is very understandable. The spiritual ministry of the Church through its ordained ministry and its type of preaching stressed that note of preservation.

### A Peculiar Type of Home Missions

Fifty years ago Rev. Marinus Van Vessem voiced these sentiments, "The history of our

denomination in a real sense is also the history of our home missions." This was true, but a peculiar type of home missions it was. It was a ministry to the spiritual needs of our scattered Holland people of Reformed persuasion who settled in the colonies, but also others who moved along with the great western pioneer movement of our American people across this great United States. A noble list of pioneer ministers, most of them now mentioned in the Necrology list of our Yearbook, served our Church in the capacity of "home missionaries." Like the prophets of old, they were burdened with the spiritual needs of their people and the welfare of the Church. They braved storms and hardships and the discouraging misunderstanding and shortsightedness of the people whom they



*Students prepare for mission work at the Reformed Bible Institute. Some will take up part-time evangelistic work in their communities. Others will make it their fulltime life work, some in foreign fields.*





*The Reformed Bible Institute in Grand Rapids is the center of training for lay missionaries, both for domestic and foreign fields. In addition to regular day classes, it has evening and correspondence courses.*

sought to help. Certainly, many of our people who settled new areas yearned for spiritual solidarity and welcomed the consecrated leadership of the home missionary; but there were also others who, obsessed with a desire for opportunity and adventure, were followed by the pleading servants of God to "seek first the Kingdom." This work had a strong evangelistic aspect.

It was during that early period of our history that the foundations of settlement and preservation were laid. The preaching sought to deepen spiritual life by sound doctrine and godly living apart from the world. The emphasis was on being pilgrims and strangers for the Lord's sake.

### **Evangelistic Sprouts**

Out of the rich soil of the Reformed heritage and of faithful instruction of God's truth, there had to grow something akin to evangelistic activity. Before World War I we were almost exclusively a Holland-speaking denomination. Emphasis was on preservation and isolation almost to the point of

insulation. But strong preaching, sound instruction, and godly living cannot be hid. Let us not forget that sound evangelism needs a strong truth basis and we question whether our denomination would have retained its distinctive quality if it had not been for the peculiar isolation background.

Near the close of the previous century there was a change from "preservation" to "propagation." Classis Grand Rapids, near the close of the century, presented an inquiry to the Synod relative to the possibility of working among our fellow American citizens. Synod was impressed, but postponed action. (See Acts of 1889, Article 33, p. 26.)

In 1892 Prof. Geert Boer expressed the thought that as Christians in America we must maintain and defend the truth of God in this great land.

In 1898 Prof. Foppe M. Ten Hoor lamented the fact that we were transplanting a section of the Netherlands here. He wrote on the Americanization of our Church.

Names that appear in the history of our Evangelistic awakenings, of men who wrote and spoke about principles and challenges, were the two Walkottens, Jacob L. Heeres, John Dolfin, Johannes Groen, Peter J. Hoekenga, Foppe Fortuin, Evert Breen, and

others. Rev. William P. Van Wyk challenged our people in his booklet on City Evangelism and he began congregational evangelistic work.

Dr. John H. Bratt in his doctoral thesis, "The Missionary Enterprise of the Christian Reformed Church of America," May, 1955, observes when writing on the dawn of our evangelistic consciousness: "That remarkable development was due in large part to two factors — consecrated laymen who sparked the movement, and a vocal minority among the clergy who publicized the great need."

It is interesting that the evangelistic urge arose from among the people and the local pastors, and the work was begun and expanded by local consistories. In the Eastern churches, as also in Grand Rapids, and Chicago, congregations opened local fields, employed workers, and conducted special Sunday Schools and mission services. This local evangelistic consciousness and endeavor certainly seemed to be spontaneous and healthy. It was not until 1926 that the Chicago churches overtured Synod to commit the denomination as a whole to the work of evangelization. Many of our present denominational activities in the field of evangelization owe their origins, directly or indirectly, to that 1926 overture.

## Evangelism Today

There has never been a time in the history of the great orthodox denominations when the subject of personal mission service was as prominent as it is today. Our Church too, especially in the last twenty years, has awakened to a keen evangelistic consciousness.

Evangelism is a popular topic of the pulpit and of the pew. There is a very evident demand on the part of many of the laymen in our Church for an evangelistic ministry, and not a small number of preachers are determined to be evangelistic at any cost and are longing for hearty co-operation from the laity. A definite synodical policy and plan of personal evangelism may still be in a state of embryo, but the thing itself looms up large. It is being felt more and more clearly that the unevangelistic congregation is missing the mark.

It was, however, already felt in 1932. The Synod of the Christian Reformed Church adopted the following resolution touching the work of Home Evangelization, commonly called City Mission work: "Synod resolves that the rampant neo-paganism of our day and land requires that every one of our churches, whether alone or in collaboration

*Representative of new fields is this work with children in the Harlem district of New York City.*





*City mission work is an important phase of the church's evangelism program, has been established in several cities for many years. This Gospel Hall is in Clifton, New Jersey.*

with a neighboring church or churches, enter upon evangelistic activities. It also requires that, if possible, in addition to the regular pastor, the church or churches engage an ordained minister especially for this evangelistic work."

The same Synod also appointed a committee with the following mandate: "Synod resolves to appoint a committee to make a careful study of the methods which should be used by our churches in evangelistic work, in order that this may proceed along sound Reformed lines, and that it, under the blessing of God, may be effective to the desired end."

The committee appointed for this work reported to the Synod of 1932 and presented an excellent report which has served as a guide for our churches and for those who study evangelism in group study and in our schools.

Incidentally, again in 1955 another official leaflet appeared — a reprint of the Synodical report by our Denominational Home Missions Committee, giving pointers on principles and methods of evangelistic work by our churches. This leaflet is widely distributed through evangelism classes in various localities.

In 1938 the Back to God Radio program

was begun with an evangelistic program of action in mind: to bring the Gospel to the "ups and outs," speaking not to men "in the gutters," but to families in the privacy of their own homes, and so to present the claims of Christ to our fellow Americans.

### **The Reformed Bible Institute**

The Reformed Bible Institute rides the crest of the evangelistic conviction among our Reformed people during the last twenty years. Witness the history of the Institute as running parallel with the Back to God Radio program and our neighborhood evangelism program.

The Reformed Bible Institute Association is patterned after our Christian School societies. Its organization is nationwide. Its membership approximates 7,000 persons. The Board of the Reformed Bible Institute Association consists of twenty-four members.

During the seventeen years of its history, the Institute has sought to carry out a three-fold program of activity. This program is carried out by:

1. An Accredited Day School, offering a concentrated three-year course of study along four lines: Bible — Missionary Training Course; Bible — Music Major Course; Bible — Church Secretary Course; Bible — Music — Secretary Course.

Already 177 graduates have gone forth from its halls as witnesses of the Gospel to the ends of the earth.

2. Popular Evening Classes in Grand Rapids and four outlying communities, with a total enrollment of 500 men and women each week.

3. Correspondence Courses for home study.

### **Again: Later but not Least**

Although the evangelism movement came later in our century of church history, it is by no means least. Today's Yearbook lists six ordained ministers in City Evangelism, and fifty full-time laymen engaged in neighborhood evangelistic work. We wish at this time to pay tribute not only to them but to all the untold numbers of laymen in each church who for no remuneration give weekly

and some daily assistance in the great work of evangelism. What an army of witnesses for the Lord!

Later, but not least! When we think of the growing nationalism in foreign countries, the possible closed doors for our foreign missions, and the increasing need for the gospel in our own land, our evangelistic program at home may be our greatest immediate challenge!

Privilege and responsibility go together. There are really none more privileged than those who are truly Christian and Reformed. To be Christian means that we are children of God, and to be Reformed means that we have the faith of our fathers as taught to the Church by the Holy Spirit. It means we have God's own message as our guide for thought and life, and the responsibility to let that message be heard by those who are still strangers to it.

P.S. — I am greatly indebted to my friend Dr. John H. Bratt, who permitted me to read his thesis, "The Missionary Enterprise of the Christian Reformed Church of America," May, 1955. This excellent, well-documented study should be made available to all in this Centennial year. It reviews the denominational mission work of the century.

## **A History of Our Work of Jewish Evangelism (1883 to 1955)**

*By* REV. JOHN ROZENDAL

**A**LREADY very early in its history the Christian Reformed Church began to accept her privilege and responsibility towards the Jewish people in America. Our denomination felt that the Lord had commanded his people to "begin at Jerusalem" (Luke 2:47). The Jew needs the gospel of Jesus Christ if he is to be saved. We believe that we preach the true gospel of Christ and therefore we must bring it to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel." We have learned from

Scripture and from church history that the Lord has his chosen ones also among the Jews.

### **Laying the Foundation**

In 1883 Mr. J. Kosteljik made a plea for Missions among the Jews in the Christian Reformed Church of North America.

In 1892 Classis Muskegon presented an Overture to Synod urging support of Jewish Missions. Rev. Isaac Fles was appointed treasurer of Jewish Evangelism and some four Jewish Missions were given material support, especially the Chicago Hebrew Mission. These Missions were not sponsored by our denomination although in 1903 our Church was represented by one Board member on the Board of Directors of the Chicago Hebrew Mission.

### **Paterson Hebrew Mission**

It was soon realized that as our denomination grew, it should conduct its own Jewish Mission work. In the providence of God the way was opened to do this in Paterson, New Jersey. The Paterson Ministerial Association, at its meeting of November 14, 1909, took note of the "neglected state of Israel in our city." It was decided to put forth efforts to begin a Mission among the Jews of Paterson, New Jersey. In a few months a society, called "The Paterson Hebrew Mission" was organized. There were thirty-six charter members representing various churches in the city. Rev. J. A. Westervelt was chosen president of the Board of Trustees on February 23, 1910. At this meeting two Rabbis appeared and voiced their sentiments as follows: "The establishment of a Mission among the Jews is a disturbance of the religious harmony now prevailing. There is a vast amount of humanitarian work demanding our united attention. Any work among Jewish children will be bitterly resented."

In spite of this opposition, the Board engaged Rev. Morris Frank as Missionary in April, 1910. He served till September of that same year. A store was rented at 121 N. Main Street in Paterson. From the beginning a large part of the support came from the Christian Reformed Church.



*One of the earliest mission endeavors of the Christian Reformed Church was among the Jewish people, in Paterson, N.J., and Chicago, Ill. This is Nathanael Institute building in Chicago.*

The next place of meeting was at 3 Temple St. Rev. S. K. Braun labored there from September, 1911, till October, 1913. In 1913 the Mission was turned over to the Christian Reformed denomination. From 1913 till June, 1915 the Rev. Mr. Feuersohn served as missionary. Mr. John Rottenberg served from Feb., 1915, till Feb., 1916. On Nov. 10, 1914, the Mission was officially taken over by the Christian Reformed Churches under the supervision of Classes Hudson and Hackensack.

In October, 1915, the building at 48 North Main Street, Paterson, New Jersey, was purchased. Gospel meetings were conducted, Bible classes were held for children and adults, and Jews were visited in their shops and homes. The following served as Missionaries: Mr. Huizer from August, 1915, till November, 1916; Mr. Neuberg from May, 1916, till July, 1916; Mr. H. Bregman, a converted Rabbi, from September, 1916, till April, 1919.

### **Medical Work**

Mr. H. Bregman suggested the opening of a dispensary. This method of reaching Jews had been used in London and in New York City. The Board appointed a committee to inquire of the New York Missions concerning dispensaries and they came back with the report that in every case they were a suc-

cessful means of reaching Jews. In October, 1917, the clinic was opened three afternoons every week, with three physicians, each conducting one clinic a week. After a period of time, when few patients came, two of the doctors discontinued this work but Dr. Walter Dunning continued and saw the clinic grow so that he had as many as 27 patients at one clinic. He served for over 30 years and was loved by the Jews as a father. His influence on them as a Christian was great. At his funeral the Jewish people wept as if they had lost one of their own family. Among those who served the dispensary in Paterson there also appears the name of the late Dr. Lee S. Huizenga. While he was in China during the last world war Dr. L. Huizenga did much to help Jewish refugees who had fled to China. A gospel meeting is held before each clinic with the patients, and much personal work is done with the patients while they await their turn to see the Doctor.

After the sudden death of Dr. W. L. Dunning Dr. Wendell Rooks and Dr. Peter G. Berkhout took over the work of the clinic. Dr. Rooks later moved to Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Dr. Berkhout serves till the present time.

In 1920 Rev. Herman Schultz began his labors at the Mission and served faithfully till he was called to glory in 1937. He labored with much blessing in this difficult task. Miss Martha Rozendal began her work as nurse and Bible woman in December, 1923. She too has served the Mission for over 30 years

and has the love and respect of all the Jewish people. Miss K. Riemersma served as Bible woman from November, 1919, till October, 1933.

Rev. John Rozendal began his labors in 1937 and accepted the call to Nathanael Institute in 1951.

In 1939 a branch Mission was opened at 253 Hamilton Ave., Paterson, New Jersey, since the North Main Street area was being taken over by the colored people. Miss Agnes Vellenga labored here for several years and was followed by Miss Wilhelmina Tuit who came to the Mission from Nathanael Institute.

In February, 1953, Rev. David Muir came to the Mission from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. He serves as Superintendent till the present time.

Thousands of Jewish men, women, and children have heard the gospel in the gospel meetings, Bible classes, and home visitation. We know that God's blessing has rested upon his word.

### Nathanael Institute

In 1860 many Hollanders moved into the district of Ashland Avenue, 14th Street and

Roosevelt Rd. in Chicago, Illinois. Later on many Jews also moved into this area. The contacts between these two peoples were many. Rev. Evert Breen was respected by the Jews and loved as their friend. Rev. Sjoerd S. Vander Heide also moved freely among them and was often seen talking with Jewish neighbors.

In 1914 Mr. John Rottenberg came to the United States from Rotterdam, Netherlands, and affiliated with the Second Christian Reformed Church of Englewood, Chicago, Illinois. On Sunday afternoons he would meet with some Jews in the basement of the Church. This was the beginning of our denominational Jewish Mission work in Chicago.

In the Acts of Synod, 1918, we read on page 23 and 24, "The Synod charges Classis Illinois to draw up a constitution for the Jewish mission of Chicago, and to submit the same for approval to the next Synod." Classis Illinois carried out this mandate and elected the following brethren as members for the Board of the Chicago Jewish Mission: Dr. John J. Van Lonkhuyzen, President; Rev. J.

*A Christmas service at the Paterson Hebrew Mission draws many, old and young.*





*A meeting at Nathanael Institute, Chicago, on the occasion of a farewell to a doctor whom the Jewish people had learned to love and respect.*

O. Vos, Rev. George W. Hylkema, and elders G. Bossenga and M. De Maa. Rev. John H. Beld began his labors as missionary in the fall of 1919. Mrs. Beld wrote about these early days as follows: "The problems confronting us were difficult ones. We realized that Jewish mission work is entirely different from all other missionary work. It has to deal with a different class of people and a different religious faith. We found that instead of being a preaching work it is a teaching work. We found it to be a continual contest with prejudices which borrow their strength not only from the Talmud but from the Bible which we believe, and with false hopes which root themselves in misunderstanding of the prophecies which we hold true. We feel that the work of dismantling the mind of a Jew of his Rabbinical prejudices involves toil and faith and courage and much prayer."

Meetings were held in the buildings of the Fourteenth Street Christian Reformed Church. In 1920 Mr. John Rottenberg was appointed Superintendent of the Mission while Rev. John H. Beld served as field agent. Mr. Bolotin, Mr. Koren, and Miss Kurtner served as helpers. After the departure of the Rev. Mr. Beld for Parkersburg, Iowa, Rev. Elias Newman and Miss Jacoba Tibma were engaged as full-time workers. In 1921 Miss Edith Vander Meulen was engaged as part-

time worker. She is still active as teacher and Bible woman.

On September 25, 1923, Mr. Ben Zion Tabachnick was accepted by the Third Christian Reformed Church of Chicago upon confession of faith. Since that time several Jews have been baptized and are now members of our churches. Others who received their training at Nathanael Institute have joined other Christian churches.

Mr. A. Huisjen was appointed Missionary in February, 1924. He served as Superintendent from 1932 till 1947 and again from 1949 till 1951. After more than 30 years of service he is still active in Jewish Evangelism.

In August, 1924, a fully equipped dispensary was opened. Miss Henrietta Stek, R.N., served as nurse, and the following doctors gave of their time and effort: Dr. Wm. De Boer, Dr. A. E. Dennison, Dr. J. A. Riedel, Dr. Wm. I. Timmer and Dr. A. L. Van Dellen. Learning from actual experience that the dispensary was an excellent means of contact with the Jews, the Board in the summer of 1925 appointed Dr. William Yonker as full-time Medical Missionary and Superintendent of the Mission. He served as Superintendent till 1932 and continued as Physician till 1951. In 1925 Miss Edith Vander Meulen was appointed full-time Bible Woman. She too is still active in the Mission after more than 30 years of service.

In December, 1927, the New Building at 1241-1243 South Pulaski Road was occupied.

The former Mission buildings on 14th Street were sold to the colored people for a church and were later torn down to make way for a housing project. The building on Grenshaw Street which was used before the building on Pulaski Road was completed, was also sold.

In 1928 Miss T. Delis was appointed to replace Miss Stek, who had become Mrs. Nathan Stone. The following served the Mission as workers during subsequent years: Miss Virginia Dijkstra, Miss Elizabeth Vander Mate, Miss Cora Elhart, Miss Marie De Bruin, Miss Wilhelmina Tuit, Miss Nellie Van Mersbergen, Miss Bena Kok, Rev. Jack Zandstra, who served as Superintendent from 1947 till 1949. In 1951 Rev. John Rozendal was called as Missionary Pastor and serves till the present time.

Twice before, our Jewish Mission had to make way for the colored people. And now in 1955 the Pulaski Road area is being taken over by them. In 1954 a store and a three-room apartment were rented on 2252 W. Foster Ave., on the North Side of Chicago. Some 250 Jewish families, connected with our Mission, have moved north in Chicago. At present there are some 53 Jewish Synagogues on the North Side. Eventually all our activities will be moved to the North Side.

The present Board members of Nathanael Institute are: Rev. Enno L. Haan, President; Rev. Gerben Zylstra, Vice President; Rev. A. De Kruyter, Treasurer; Rev. Bernard Byma, Secretary; Mr. George De Boer; Mr. Ralph Dekker.

In 1951 Dr. William Yonker retired from active service because of ill health. He had ministered to thousands of Jewish people in the name and spirit of Jesus Christ. They had learned to love him as a Christian doctor. A large gathering met at the Mission to bid him and Mrs. Yonker farewell and many a tear was shed. A Jew looks for deeds rather than words from a Christian. Jesus Christ is our great High Priest. He also healed the sick as a means to demonstrate his message. That is also the approach in our dispensary. A gospel meeting is held with the

patients before each clinic. The patients pay an average of \$2.00 per visit including medicine. In 1951 Dr. E. Van Reken, M.D., accepted the appointment to succeed Dr. Yonker. He had served as Medical Missionary in China. Miss Elizabeth Wesseling, R.N., serves as nurse since January, 1955.

Throughout the years many of our church people have given willingly and freely of their time and energy in behalf of Nathanael Institute. A word of special mention should go to Mr. George Ottenhoff, who served the Mission as treasurer for 28 years. In many other ways he was always ready and willing to give valuable advice and service to the cause of Jewish Missions.

In 1947 a beginning was made with reaching the Jews through our local churches in Cicero, Ill. Mr. A. Huisjen labored at this task till 1949 when he again took up work in the Mission Building. In 1951 the project of Parish Jewish Community Evangelism was extended to Grand Rapids, Michigan, and the surrounding area. Mr. Huisjen also promoted the work in California. This project is still in the experimental stage and much work must first be done to guide the churches in taking up this task. The "Shepherd's Voice" is published four times a year and is a paper especially designed to reach Jewish people. Some 5500 copies are sent out to Jews throughout the States and Canada.

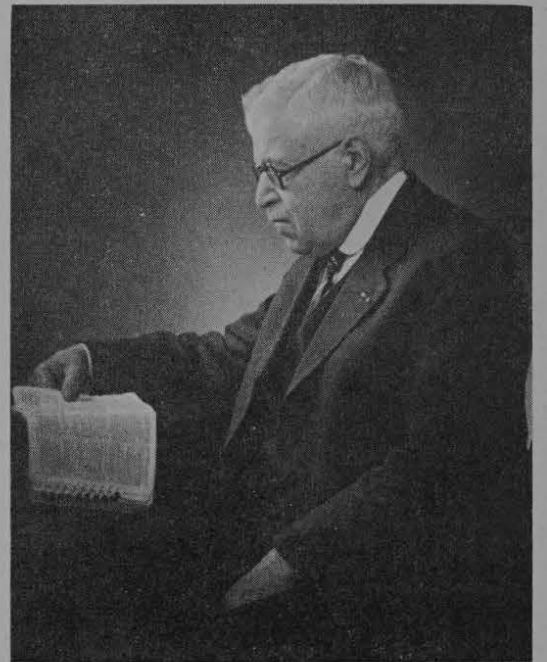
Thus by means of the Mission House and by means of Jewish Community Evangelism the Christian Reformed Church is bringing the gospel to Jews everywhere.

The Synod of 1955 placed Jewish Evangelism under the Board of Home Missions. In this way, especially the project of Jewish Community Evangelism will receive a wider and more denominational emphasis.

May the Lord continue to give us love and zeal and much prayer in behalf of Jewish Evangelism. The Lord, who sends us out with the gospel, has demonstrated that he also has his chosen ones among the Jews. We know that his gospel will continue to be the power of God unto salvation also for the Jews.

# INDIAN AND FOREIGN MISSIONS





*The name of Dr. Henry Beets (above) became synonymous with Missions in our denomination. He became our first Secretary of Missions in 1920, served 19 years in this capacity and worked tirelessly all this time to further the mission cause among our churches. His work was ably carried on by his successor, the Rev. J. C. De Korne (left), who served from 1939 to 1951.*

## Our Work of Indian and Foreign Missions

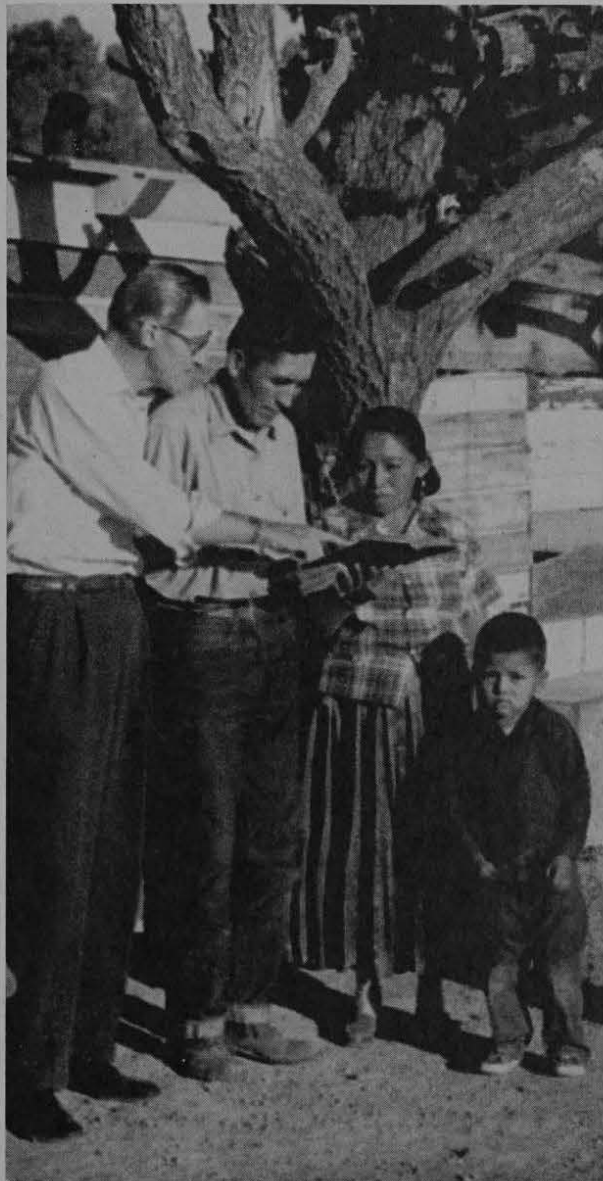
By REV. HENRY J. EVENHOUSE\*

THE Christian Reformed Board of Missions has been given the blessed assignment of extending the Kingdom of Christ through foreign missions. The Board is composed of thirty-one members, of whom twenty-eight are representatives of their respective Classes, and three are delegates-at-large appointed by Synod. The Executive Committee of the Board is made up of the classical delegates of the Michigan-Illinois area. This committee meets monthly and the entire Board meets annually in mid-February. A mission office is maintained in the new denominational building in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

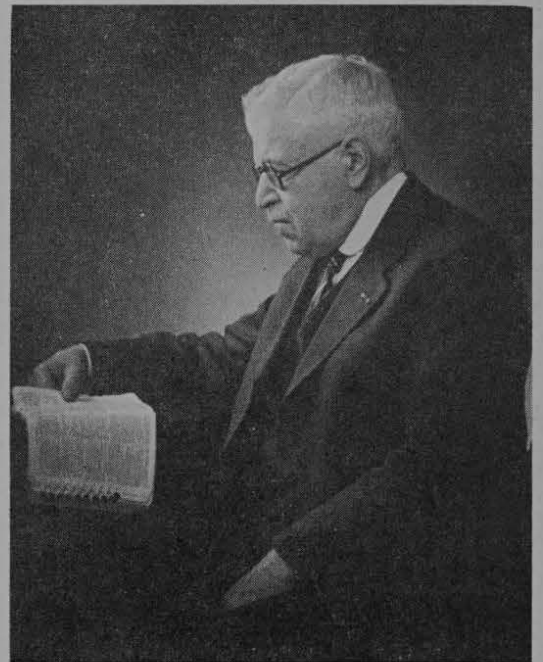
The Secretary of Foreign Missions, Rev. Henry J. Evenhouse, is an appointee of Synod. Four others are joined with him in the administrative work in the office. Mr. Harry Boersma is the bookkeeper and serves as Assistant to the Treasurer, Mr. Alvin Huibregtse is Assistant Secretary, and Miss Reta De Boer and Mrs. Jane Hubers perform the secretarial functions.

The Board must carry on many services of various kinds and for this reason the following committees serve to expedite matters: Officers, Finance, Recruiting, Promotion, Or-

\*The section of this report that deals with Ceylon was written by Rev. John O. Schuring. See the introduction to that section.



*Rev. Don Houseman explaining the Scripture.*



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*Stewart Barton, Jack Brown and Rev. Don Houseman with Navaho mother and children.*

ganization, and Pension. In order to have an alert response to the needs of each field, the following area committees have been appointed: Indian, Japan and Formosa, South America and Ceylon, Sudan.

The administrative aspect of foreign missions is a responsible part of our denominational life, and for this we need the prayers of God's people.

### **Early History**

A strong missionary spirit was evident in the Christian Reformed Church from the very beginning. From the outset, the problem was not, "*Shall we begin,*" but rather "*Where shall we begin?*"



*Church at Shiprock, New Mexico.*



*Two Indian women at the Rehoboth Hospital.*

Already in October, 1857, at the second classical meeting of the infant denomination, it was decided that special prayer meetings for missions should be held every first Monday of the month, and the offering received was to be used for distribution of Bibles. At the meeting of Classis on July 22, 1863, Rev. Wilhelmus H. Van Leeuwen and Rev. Koenraad Vanden Bosch were appointed to receive the money collected. This money was to be sent to the Netherlands, although later some was also sent to South Africa for Bible distribution.

At the General Assembly of seventeen congregations in 1871 there was a discussion of the possibility of initiating a program of bringing the gospel to the heathen, and in 1872 it was decided that each Classis was to administer its own mission affairs. In 1873 a distinction was made between domestic and foreign missions, the desire to have mission work of our own was more pronounced, and Pentecost was mentioned as an appropriate Sunday on which to take a mission offering. It was noted that the sum of \$322.66 was on hand and Rev. Jacob Noordewier was appointed treasurer for foreign mission funds.

The Synod of 1880 took notice of the developing urge for mission work and appointed the first foreign missions committee. This

*Rehoboth as seen from the air.*



committee consisted of Rev. Roelf T. Kuiper, president; Rev. Gerrit K. Hemkes, secretary; and Rev. Koenraad Vanden Bosch. During the following years articles pleading for missionary enterprises continued to appear in DE WACHTER, and many prospective fields were mentioned. However, sentiment gradually seemed to crystallize and the Synod of 1886 decided to begin mission work among the American Indians. The following committee was appointed to search for a field: Rev. Evert Bos, president; Rev. T. M. Vanden Bosch, secretary; Elder J. W. Garvelink, treasurer; Rev. Roelof T. Kuiper; and Elder J. Gelock.

### Purpose

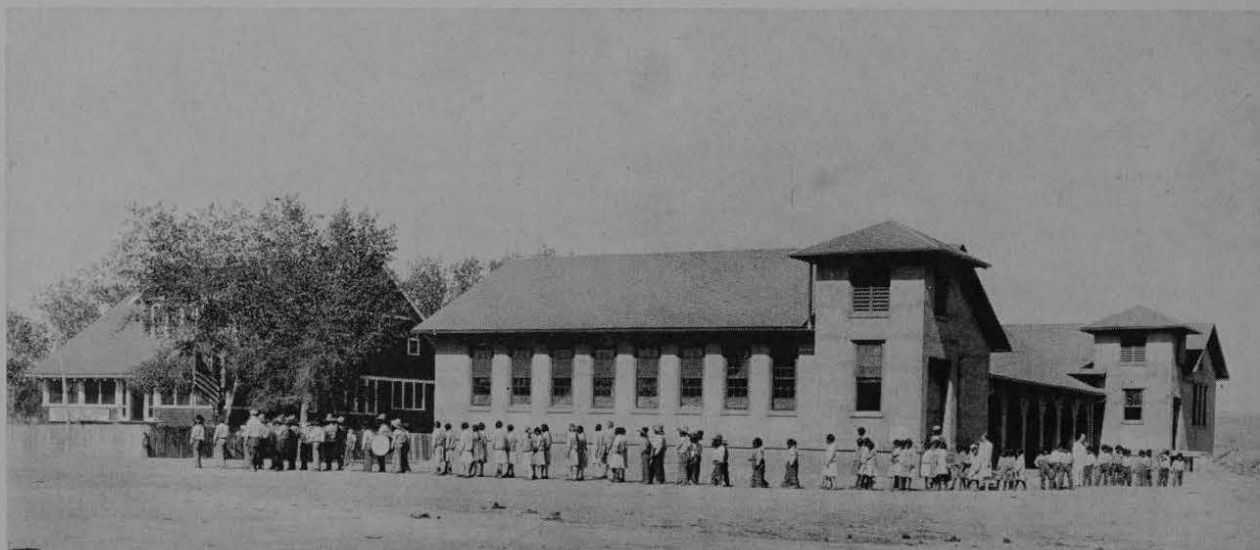
The missionary work of our Church has been carried forward with the one purpose of proclaiming God's message of redemption, and with the constant prayer that the Church of Christ might be established where it had not been existing before. For the achievement of this objective our work has been chiefly that of preaching the Word in chapels and by personal visitation. Ancillary to this work there has also been in some areas the establishment of educational and medical centers for the enhancement of the work. We have our educational and medical work in New Mexico among the Navajo and Zuni In-



*Indian pupils at Intermountain School,  
Brigham City, Utah.*

dians and in Nigeria. Because of the widespread illiteracy and the desperate need for medical help these areas have been served through these special services. At the present time it appears that in Japan, Formosa, Ceylon, and South America we shall restrict ourselves to the direct missionary assignment of preaching the Word. Whatever the medium employed, the objective remains the same, whether the missionary be minister or doctor, teacher or nurse — namely, that of telling the story of the redeeming love of God as made known to us in the Holy Scriptures.

*Zuni compound.*





*The Leipao congregation in China with three of our missionaries.*



*Christian workers in Formosa.*

### **Indian Missions**

The mission work among the Navajo and Zuni Indians of New Mexico and Arizona was begun in 1896. Some work had been attempted among the Sioux Indians on the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota, but this was discontinued after a year. For six years the outlook for beginning work among other tribes seemed dark because there was much opposition to mission work among the Indians. Rev. Johannes Groen must be given much credit for leading our Church to work

among the Navajo Indians of the Southwest. He made a special study of the Indians of this country and was led to concentrate on the Navajo Indians. He discovered that although this tribe numbered about 25,000, very little Protestant mission work had been done among them. At the Synod of 1896 Rev. J. H. Vos and Rev. Johannes Groen induced Synod to decide to begin missionary work among the Navajos. At the same Synod Candidate Herman Fryling made a very impressive speech and gave evidence that he would be willing to go to work among these Indians.

Thus it was that on September 30, 1896, the Spring Street Church witnessed the installation of a missionary. Another young couple, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Vander Wagen, had also volunteered for service among the Indians and were present at this installation service.

On October 10, 1896, these four pioneer missionaries of our church arrived in Gallup, New Mexico, to work among the Navajo Indians. They settled in Fort Defiance and were permitted by the government to contact the young Indians attending that school. In as much as Fort Defiance was a trading center they were able to meet the older people who came to the post and to the



*Lupwe medical dispensary.*

*The Takum church.*



school for their children. For several years the work prospered and there was much rejoicing in the Church as it read of those who had been converted. In 1897 Mr. and Mrs. Vander Wagen received permission from Synod to begin work in Zuni, but Mr. and Mrs. Fryling continued in Fort Defiance until 1904. The work had become more discouraging because the Indian children were compelled to attend Catholic classes the day after our missionary taught them, and the amount of time allowed our missionary de-

creased. For that reason the Synod of 1904 decided to transfer its work to another location on the Indian field. This move led to the opening of Rehoboth, which today is the main station on our Indian field.

For more than sixty years the work has been continued among the Navajo and Zuni Indians. During that time a veritable army of men and women has joined in the work. Space does not permit a listing of all those who have served on the Indian field, but the work has been expanded and there are now missionaries bringing the gospel at the following mission centers: Beautiful Mountain, Brigham City, Carisso, Crown Point, Farmington, Gallup, Indian Village, Nahaschitty, Red Rock, Rehoboth, Phoenix, San Antone, Shiprock, Toadlena, Tohatchi, Two Wells, Whitehorse, and Zuni.

The fruits upon the work have at times been sparse, but they are exceedingly precious. Today the outlook is very encouraging. The hopes for having organized congregations on the Indian field are brighter now than at any other time in our mission history among the Indians. We carry forward the work with a staff of twelve ordained missionaries, one doctor, seven registered nurses, two principals and fourteen teachers at Rehoboth, Zuni, and Skeets Camp. Besides these we have quite a number who are active in the administrative and maintenance phase of the work.

Our oldest mission field is also our largest. It is within our continental United States, but calls for workers who have the qualities of steadfast loyalty to a difficult task. For these workers we give God praise.

## China

In 1920 China became the first foreign mission enterprise of the Christian Reformed Church. Already in 1918 the Synod had appointed a committee to investigate mission fields in Central Africa and China in order that Synod might make a choice, and China was selected. On November 23, 1920, three missionary families disembarked at Shanghai from the SS CHINA. This first trio of missionaries was Dr. Lee S. Huizenga, Rev. John C. De Korne, and Rev. Harry A. Dyk-

stra, all accompanied by their families. Within a month the three men made a preliminary exploratory trip; after due investigation the North Kiangsu field was recommended, and the Synod of 1922 adopted this as the field of our Church. The missionaries and their families settled near the city of Jukao. The work in China prospered under the blessings of God, but there were also discouragements, and several times the missionaries were repatriated because of war and revolution. Today China is overrun by Communism, the doors to mission endeavor are closed, and the Chinese Christian Church is left to carry on, as God enables it, "under the cross."

### Nigeria

The DeKorne-Huizenga committee appointed by the Synod of 1918 to investigate probable mission fields in Central Africa and China had recommended Africa as a new mission field for the Christian Reformed Church. The Synod decided that China should be our first foreign field and missionaries were sent to that country.

The Christian Reformed Church was represented, however, in the Sudan as early as 1920. Miss Johanna Veenstra, after hearing Dr. Karl W. Kumm, felt called to serve in Nigeria. She was accepted by the American Branch of the Sudan United Mission and sailed for Lagos, Nigeria, in 1919. In February of 1921 she was sent to a new station in Lupwe among the Dzompere tribe — the word Dzompere meaning "to eat man." They were a very primitive people and, never having seen white people, were afraid of her at first. In 1930 Miss Nelle Breen, now Mrs. Edgar H. Smith, arrived in Ibi to help Miss Veenstra, and in 1932 Miss Jennie Stielstra and Miss Bertha Zagers accompanied Miss Veenstra when she returned to Nigeria after a furlough at home.

For thirteen years Miss Veenstra labored on the Sudan mission field, and during that time she and her colleagues made the news of God's marvelous works in Nigeria known to our church public and enlisted the love and support of many of our people.

In 1939 the Synod of our Church officially adopted the Sudan mission field; that is, that

section which was under the direction of the Christian Reformed missionaries. Since January 1, 1940, the work has been carried forward with tremendous blessings, and there has been the emergence of the native church.

In 1950 the work was expanded to include the work among the Tiv tribe east of the Katsina Ala River. In 1954 the work among the Tiv tribe was again expanded to include



*Johanna Veenstra Memorial School at Lupwe.*

*Rev. Edgar Smith teaching native evangelists.*



eventually the entire Tiv tribe west of the Katsina Ala River. This gives us the responsibility of preaching the gospel to over 1,000,000 people. At the present time there are eleven ordained men, six nurses, two doctors, eleven teachers, and other personnel working together to win men to Christ among the Tiv and Hausa speaking people. The Church of Christ in the Sudan has been organized and our native churches have fellowship in

this church so that the church may be recognized by the government as truly indigenous to Nigeria.

Since doors are still open in Nigeria, the work continues to grow. In a period when all of Africa is experiencing great change, our mission is strategically situated to lift up the banner of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Light of the world and who alone can be the true hope for Africa. The time allotted us to serve in Africa may be short, but our missionaries witness faithfully, trusting that the work they now do will be to the redemption of souls and a salutary power for the people of Nigeria.

### Japan

Japan, the island of the rising sun, is our newest mission field. Following the close of World War II our missionaries returned to China, but in 1949 the field was completely cut off when the Communist forces made further work impossible.

Rev. Albert H. Smit, veteran missionary to China, investigated Japan as a mission field at the request of the Board, and when he returned to this country he recommended



*Church in Baissa.*

*Lupwe leaders and teachers.*



Japan as a field white unto the harvest. General Douglas MacArthur, director of the occupation of Japan, was urging churches in the United States to send missionaries, and the Synod of 1950 instructed the Board of Missions to do so.

Two youthful missionaries who had had initial experience in China were called for this task. Rev. Henry Bruinooge and family arrived in Tokyo on March 26, 1951, and they were joined several months later by Rev. Edward Van Baak and family. Since their arrival one Bible woman and four more ordained missionaries have entered the work. Today the mission has its active posts for evangelization in Suwa, Kofu, Kawagoe, and Tokyo.

The 90,000,000 people of Japan are highly literate, strongly under the influence of western culture, yet tenaciously held by the powers of Buddhism and Shintoism. In this land of "the rising sun" we are happy to be able to bring the gospel of the Son of Righteousness.

### **Formosa**

Miss Lillian Bode, a former Bible woman in China, is the representative of the Christian Reformed Church among the dispersed Chinese on the island of Formosa. She resides in Taipei and brings the Word in the city and surrounding areas, working in cooperation with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. She is a faithful witness for the Lord and her labors have been greatly blessed. The great influx of missionaries to Formosa from other churches has caused the Christian Reformed Church to hesitate to add to that number in so small an area; but Formosa remains, nevertheless, a point of great importance for the hoped-for eventual opening of the great mainland of China.

### **South America**

The mission arm of our Church also reaches down into South America. This vast continent was for a long time regarded as being outside the territory needing evangelization, but during the last decade it has received a great deal of attention from Protestant missions.

In 1935 the Rev. Jerry Pott accepted the call to go to Argentina to serve as a pastor loaned to a Dutch immigrant church in the city of Tres Arroyos. He went out as a minister to serve a local congregation. The members of this congregation were immigrants from the Netherlands who had appealed to the Christian Reformed Church for pastoral help. For more than ten years Mr. Pott fulfilled this assignment and with the blessing of God the church was strengthened and able eventually to supply its own pastoral needs. From Tres Arroyos he went to Buenos Aires and later to Mar del Plata, and in both places congregations developed.

The initial invitation came to us to supply ministers for the local congregation. Now the established churches request help to carry forward the great task of evangelizing the peoples of the land. Spanish is the prevailing language even among the people of Dutch heritage. Our Church has responded to this appeal and soon our first missionaries will be sent to Argentina. Their converts will be united, we hope, with the Reformed Church of Argentina. In this way we shall lengthen our mission arm and at the same time help strengthen the Reformed Church already in the land.

Brazil also comes within the orbit of our mission outreach. This vast and challenging country has a population of over 50,000,000 and is as large as the United States plus an extra state of Texas. The principal language is Portuguese. As in Argentina, the need for evangelization is tremendous and at the present time the door of opportunity for missions is still wide open.

In 1936 Rev. and Mrs. William V. Muller went to Brazil to shepherd a small congregation of Dutch immigrants located in Carambei. After more than a decade of labor at this place Mr. Muller helped to establish a second Dutch colony in the land, later known as Castrolanda.

These two communities of Holland people have developed their own churches and have been determined to perpetuate among their growing youth the Reformed faith as we have come to know it. The desire has also arisen among them to make the blessed mes-



*Our pioneer missionary to Africa, Miss Johanna Veenstra, (right) and co-worker Nelle Breen, now Mrs. Edgar H. Smith (left).*

*Rev. and Mrs. Herman Fryling and family. Mr. Fryling was our first ordained missionary to go to our Indian Mission field in New Mexico.*



sage of redemption known to the other citizens of the land, with the result that we are also studying the possibility of missionary extension into Brazil.

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The Synod of 1956 has charged our Mission Board to take over the supervision of the work in Ceylon. Before the transfer was made the Centennial Committee had already requested one of the missionaries in that field to prepare a report on the work in Ceylon

for this Centennial book. That report was written by Rev. John O. Schuring and is incorporated in this article. It reads as follows:

### **Greetings from Ceylon**

Your workers from Lanka Land greet you upon this happy Centenary Anniversary.

It strikes us strongly to do so out of the bosom of the Dutch Reformed Church of Ceylon, which will commemorate its 314th Anniversary this year. Why is a centennial denomination loaning her ministers to a Church that has passed the tri-centennial mark? A sobering question which calls for reflection. It moves one to ask: Will the Christian Reformed Church be borrowing from others when she has passed her tri-centenary? The answer to that question is being forged even now upon the anvil of your own church history. Your workers here hope and pray that history's answer will be God's continued blessing upon your growth, your spirituality, and your evangelism. That is our prayer and labor for this Calvinistic outpost of God's Kingdom.

### **A Time of Tension**

Your helpful hand extended to this Ceylon Church began very casually and inconspicuously. Providential meetings between individual members of both churches planted the seed which flowered into synodical action to call and send one of your ministers to assist the Ceylon Church in being true to its Sovereign Lord, and to the common heritage of our Reformed faith.

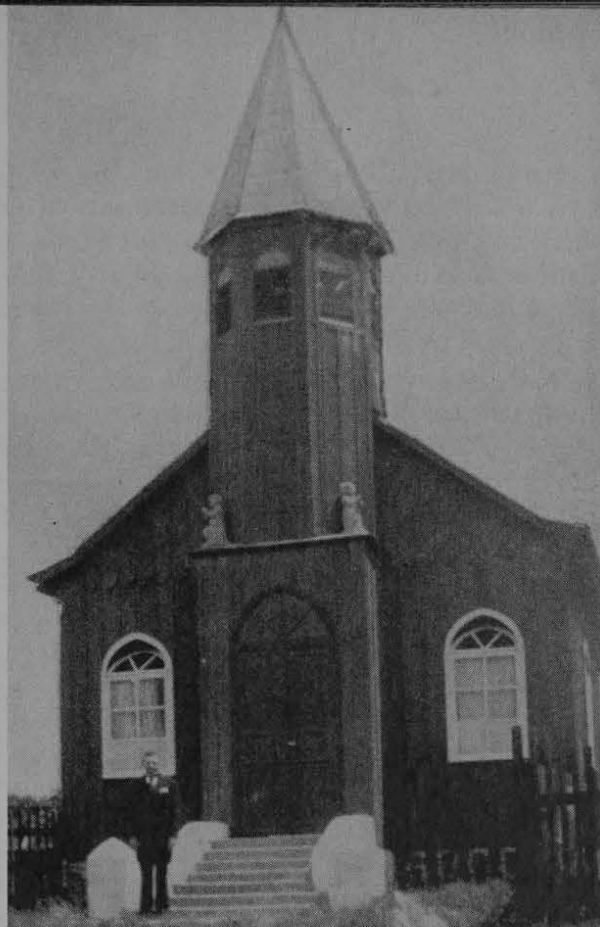
On March 4, 1949, my family and I arrived in Colombo and I began laboring as a Collegiate Minister of the Dutch Reformed Church of Ceylon, under the jurisdiction of her General Consistory and under the sympathetic and understanding care of your Synodical Committee for South America and Ceylon.

It soon became apparent that theological tensions within the collegiate ministry was disturbing the Church's peace, paralyzing her power to witness, robbing its membership of clear-cut convictions, frustrating the indoctrination of its youth, fostering doctrinal indifference, and seeking to negotiate a

church unionism which threatened to quench forever the light of Calvinism on Ceylon. But God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. As the tensions mounted between the ministers, theological differences became irreconcilable and the General Consistory found itself standing at a fork in the road. She must now choose either the road of liberality of interpretation or the road of loyalty to her confessions and to the Reformation principles. She chose the latter and dismissed one of her ministers, together with those of the Consistory who stood for liberalism. All the heartaches and sin that attach themselves to any schism of Christ's body were experienced here also. To this very moment we continue to feel and suffer from its effects.

### **A Positive, Progressive Program**

As the Church was reeling and staggering under the terrific blows of schism God was not unmindful of his people. Into that breach stepped the Van Ens brothers. On November 22, 1952, Rev. Clarence and his wife, Marga-



*Reformed Church at Carambeny, Brazil.*

*Group of people in Casilda, Argentina, which attend evangelistic services.*



ret, and Rev. John Van Ens and his wife, Sylvia, arrived in Colombo, just a year after our leave-taking. What the arrival of these men of God meant for the battle-weary ministers and the fatigued Church only God's book can reveal.

With zeal and enthusiasm and with an eye to the future they began to set the Reformed house in order. That was no easy task, for every room in this great ecclesiastical house needed tending to. Undaunted by the size of their task they set to work. They laid the foundation for a positive program of action and the progress of that program indicates the smile of God's approval and blessing. The beauty of this program is that the General Consistory is hammering down, by clear-cut decisions, the spiritual planks of her platform so that her word becomes flesh. Many fine decisions had been passed down through the years of the Church's history but they had never been translated into action. They remained noble resolves on the minute book, and they were forgotten with the turning of the page. That is no longer true. A positive program of progress is on.

Today the Heidelberg Catechism is preached weekly by all the ministers, Catechism classes are conducted regularly in all the churches, Calvinistic Youth Rallies are held monthly, a Reformed Bible Institute has been organized, our lay evangelists are being thoroughly indoctrinated in the Reformed faith, and the sons of the Church are responding to the call of the gospel ministry as three of them are presently enrolled in Calvin College and Seminary.

The evangelistic efforts of the Church are now well organized. Most of the congregations regularly conduct monthly open-air gospel meetings in the vernacular. Recently a new program of evangelism was instituted in the heart of Ceylon when a full-time lay evangelist was assigned to work among the thousands of Buddhists in that area. Locally, in Colombo, Singhalese and Tamil services, as well as Sunday School classes, are conducted. Rev. Clarence Van Ens heads up this work as Secretary of Missions.

Good use is also made of the printed page.

The work of the World Home Bible League in Ceylon is under the Church's sponsorship. A stream of gospel tracts flows through the Church to the non-Christian neighbors. Back to God Hour sermons and the Family Altar are shared not only with the membership of the Church but also with others as well as the clergymen of other denominations. Our own Church publication, "The Herald," has grown from a six and eight-page periodical to a sixteen-page one with regular departments for the increase of Reformed knowledge and for the deepening of spiritual life. Annual Calvinistic Conferences are held with the Church's youth, with its membership, and with the Christian teachers of our day schools.

The listing of all of these activities does not even exhaust the positive progressive program of action now under way. Much could be said about the literature of the National Union of Christian Schools now in use in Ceylon. More could be said about our Reformed Book Center. But let this be sufficient to cause you to rejoice with us in the grace and goodness of our Sovereign God, even as we rejoice with you upon this centenary celebration.

"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (I Cor. 15:58).

We have given you a rapid survey of our several foreign mission fields, seven in number — New Mexico, Nigeria, Japan, Ceylon, Formosa, Argentina, and Brazil. For all this we must keep before our minds and hearts the great command of the Lord. It is His will that all nations praise Him. For the realization of that goal He has called also our Church. To fulfill our duty we need the constant prayers of all our people, the supply of funds to carry forward the work, and the offer of service from men and women who will say, "Here am I, send me."

Ours is an unspeakably precious heritage. Millions remain outside the fold. Today is our day of opportunity and duty. May God help us to be faithful servants as we face this great assignment.

# OUR CATECHISM CLASSES AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS



*Teaching the fundamentals of our faith to our juniors.*



## The Place of Catechism Instruction In Our Denomination

By REV. WILLIAM VANDER HAAK

CATECHISM instruction, as the ecclesiastical administration of the Word of God to covenant youth, is a vital part of the work of the Church. Its purpose is to bring covenant youth to spiritual maturity and equip them for devoted church membership.

The Christian Reformed Church has always placed great emphasis upon catechism instruction as a work of necessity in the function of the Church. The reason for this may be found in the fact that as a Church we have always stressed the biblical truth of the covenant and its implications for covenant youth. A vital part of the covenantal obligation is the requirement that youth should be trained in the truth of God's Word. Here the Church faces a responsibility. There is no doubt that at baptism, parents assume the obligation to promote the spiritual welfare of the children. Christian schools are formed precisely on that foundation. But the Church assumes obligations as well. Baptized children are members of the Church and as juvenile members need to be developed for communicant ecclesiastical membership. Such training must be continued until the youthful member has made a decision when arriving at the age of maturity; a decision that does not lead to salvation but springs from salvation. Such a decision is evidenced in that which is commonly

called Profession of Faith.

Officially the Church has assured the continuance of catechism instruction by insisting that young people are to make profession of faith intelligently and sincerely. To that end they need to be indoctrinated. Classical church visitors are instructed to inquire of each church whether the minister catechizes regularly, whether the elders visit the classes to observe how they are conducted and attended. The elders are also questioned as to their willingness to assist the minister in this work when necessary.

Early in our history as a denomination it was ruled that parents who wilfully neglect to send their children to catechism classes made themselves subject to discipline, even to the extent of excommunication. Young people who refused to attend were also to be disciplined.

Our Synods have frequently dealt with the question of catechetical instruction.

As early as the year 1908, in response to an overture from Classis Illinois, Synod urged the churches to guard against the danger of placing catechism instruction in the background so that it should lose its effectiveness.

At the Synod of 1912, a committee appointed for the purpose of studying catechetical instruction, presented a report in which they indicated several reasons why we

should not only maintain but also improve catechetical instruction in our churches.

In 1918, Synod declared that greater emphasis should be placed on catechesis, considering the threatening danger that the Sunday School might replace it.

In 1924, Synod received a report, from a committee appointed for this purpose, which contains many excellent suggestions. Three reasons were presented for the need of improvement in catechetical instruction. The first was the lack of unity in subject matter and method. The second was the lack of tact and interest of some catechists and the third the lack of interest on the part of youth, perhaps attributable to the dull and unattractive manner in which the instruction was given. A rather bold suggestion was offered by the committee advising that the question-book method should be entirely discarded for all classes. It recommended the use of books containing reading material geared to the age of the child. This suggestion found no favor.

The Synod of 1926 was the first to appoint a permanent committee to interest itself with the instruction of our youth. This committee presented several reports culminating in the proposed Unified Church School, incorporating catechism work and Sunday School classes. All their work, which was extensive, appeared to be in vain for the Synod never adopted their suggestions. An interesting part of their studies is the report on a questionnaire sent to our churches. This questionnaire reflects the status of catechism in our denomination at that date. The study points out that there is no unity as to subject matter, length of term, or age of pupils. The study does point out that there is a desperate need for better facilities for catechism instruction in our church buildings.

Between the years of 1938 and 1943 the Compendium of the Heidelberg Catechism was revised and recommended for use to our churches.

More recently the need for improvement in catechism instruction has resulted in the appointment of a standing committee known as the Committee on Education. To date it has presented many excellent suggestions

to Synod, most of which have been approved. It has outlined a complete and unified course of study on which textbooks are presently being prepared. It has urged the use of the best in present day pedagogical methods and completed a new revision of the Compendium which is presently being tested in the churches of our denomination. Realizing the importance of this work, and the dangers that constantly threaten it, the suggestion of the committee, made a few years ago, for the appointment of a Director of Education may yet become a necessity in our denomination.

As we look back over one hundred years of existence as a denomination and consider the place of catechism instruction in our Church, we may thank God that catechism classes still are held in all our churches. We should appreciate all that has been done through such classes for the development of our covenant youth. We should also realize that much more can be done to safeguard this vital task of our Church. If apathy should develop within our ranks toward this work, it would be the first step toward its discontinuance, and that in turn would be the first step toward the decay of our denomination. This very thing has happened in many denominations about us in our world and in our day. May God bless every effort that is put forth to improve our teaching materials, methods, and facilities, to maintain a sense of urgency in our catechists, and to develop a living interest in our catechumens.

No Church that is bent upon strengthening its life and increasing its fruitfulness should ever forget that as a plant can be no healthier than its roots, so the Church can never be more sound than the covenant life of the families from which it draws its life and energy and the youth of those families from which it derives its future strength.

"The thorough and intelligent instruction and training of our youth becomes increasingly important as the battle against unbelief and worldliness progresses. For this reason the religious education provided by the churches will in an increasing measure require the care and encouragement of the Church so that both in material and method it may keep pace with the requirements of

the times. It is doubted by no one among us that the education of our children and young people is of vital importance, and that upon it depends to a large extent not only the future growth and usefulness of our churches, but even their very existence. Too much prayerful and careful thought and effort cannot be devoted to this subject." Committee on Education, 1928.

## **The Centennial and the Sunday School**

*By* JOHN H. SCHAAL

**T**HE SUNDAY SCHOOL, with God's blessing, has come a long way in the Christian Reformed Church during the past one hundred years. Its rise to the present

position of prestige, respect, and usefulness was not without difficulty. Yet, in spite of criticism, the Sunday school unobtrusively carried on the task of giving systematic Bible instruction along chronological, practical, and ethical lines. Through the years there were leaders who, in spite of opposition and ridicule, spoke up for the worthwhileness of its mission and worked for its progress.

When the Christian Reformed Church was organized in 1857, in spite of the fact that a Sunday school was functioning in the colony with Rev. A. C. Van Raalte's blessing, it had little sympathy for a movement that did not come from a Reformed background but was identified with American life. The leaders of this new Church had all too clearly seen the tragic results of the neglect of catechism teaching in the Eastern branch of the Re-

*Teaching the Bible in one of our institutions for children.*



formed Church with which they had been identified and were afraid that the Sunday school might eventually replace the catechism class and the Christian school. For that reason they would make no room for the institution which originated through Robert Raikes in England.

The turning-point in favor of the Sunday school came in the year 1873 when the Sunday school was first mentioned favorably in the official records of the Christian Reformed General Meeting. In the year 1871 a Reformed Sunday school society called "Jachin" had been organized in the Netherlands. That fact came to the attention of the Rev. Douwe J. Van der Werp, the first editor of *De Wachter*, the Holland language official church paper. He wrote on the subject in this vein: "The Christian Reformed Church in the Netherlands distinguishes itself above America not only in the matter of societies for Reformed Christian school instruction but also in Sunday school instruction. How much in this is the Netherlands ahead of America! How much more fortunate are the children there than in America." (*De Christelyk Gereformeerde Kerk* by Dr. Henry Beets, page 395, as taken from a quotation in *De Wachter*, December 13, 1872).

Although it cannot be verified from any official decision, the thought is that it was the Rev. Mr. Van der Werp who pleaded for the Sunday school at the General Meeting of the Church and that this resulted in the official decision of this body to urge every congregation of the denomination to establish a Sabbath school (*Acts of Synod*, 1873, Article 8). In 1877 the Rev. Geert E. Boer, later professor of theology, wrote a favorable recommendation for the Sunday school in *De Wachter*. It is also heartening to read of consecrated laymen who put their weight behind this movement. Such men as N. Silvius, H. Bosch and the veteran Christian school teacher, J. Velkamp pleaded for the movement while the Rev. Roelf T. Kuiper, who at one time served the historic congregation at Graafschap, Michigan, strongly recommended the Sabbath school, stressing as his reason the conditions which were found in church, school, and society in the Ameri-

can world. Because he wanted the children of the church to be fortified against the worldliness of the day, he was enthusiastic in his support of the Sunday school movement, as one of the agencies which would help stem the tide of liberalism and loose living.

Not everyone by any means was convinced of the Sunday school's good. In those early days the critics were many and the friends few. Dr. Henry Beets also states in the book mentioned above that time and time again expressions such as "a necessary evil," "wooden pillars," and "trojan horse" were applied to the Sunday school by its opponents. Those criticisms registered deeply, for even today one still hears the same expressions. It is an interesting observation that the early fear of the harmful effect which the Sunday school would have on the catechism and Christian school did not materialize. The catechism and Christian school have both grown strong through the years and have not suffered because of the Sunday school movement. Moreover, if these fears ever are realized in the future it will not be because of the Sunday school but because of a spirit which has entered into the very core of our theological soundness and our spiritual vitality—a spirit of liberalism and worldliness, the very spirit which the Sunday school is fighting with all its vigor.

For some years prior to 1888 the explanations of the Sunday school lessons were ably written in *De Wachter*. From that year on they appeared in the *Sabbath School Bode*, published by James Tanis of Paterson, New Jersey, because the Church was becoming more Americanized. *The Christian Reformed Sabbath School Lesson Helps* for juniors and seniors appeared in 1898 and continued until 1917.

The publication which gained the pre-eminence and which replaced all the others was a privately owned periodical, *The Instructor*, which was published in Zeeland, Michigan, and for many years was edited by Rev. Lambertus J. Lamberts. Finally, when the Church decided that it wanted to have jurisdiction over the Sunday school papers, the Synod of 1937 approved the purchase of the rights



*Pictures are an aid to learning in Sunday School Bible lessons.*

of the Instructor Publishing Company. The Rev. Mr. Lamberts was appointed the official editor, an office which he held until the fall of 1945 when the present editor was appointed.

Odd as it may seem today, for a while the Church followed the International Sunday school lessons but because of a constant stream of criticism, in 1937 initiated its own series. The lessons of the National Sunday School Association, an affiliate of the National Association of Evangelicals, were followed for a time. Beginning with 1955, the committee appointed by the Synod for Sunday school matters began both a new series of papers and a new series of Sunday school lessons running over a five-year cycle, in which time the entire Bible is to be covered.

With the close of 1954 it was decided to discontinue separate church and mission Sunday school papers. In spite of some objections before the papers were combined, particularly on the part of mission workers, the improved Sunday school papers are now quite universally accepted in the denomina-

tion. Other churches of Reformed background are also making use of these new papers.

Due to consistent pressure from many parts of the Church for semi-graded lessons, in 1955 we started publication of four new papers, replacing the old series. These papers now appear in two colors and are of a graded nature. The titles are: *Bible Stories*, *Bible Light*, *Bible Guide*, and *Bible Truth*. *The Key*, the teachers' quarterly, carried over from the preceding period. The combined circulation is slightly over 80,000.

A perusal of the official synodical decisions on Sunday school matters reveals a rather interesting history of the Sunday school movement. Such subjects were debated and finally resolved as the need for a separate series of lessons; whether or not the Sunday school lesson explanations should appear in the official church paper; the use of a specially approved song book; the place which the Sunday school should occupy in the official church family; and finally whether or not the church itself had the right to publish

Sunday school papers. On practically all these questions, the Church finally decided to go all the way and it made the Sunday school — including the publication of its papers — part of the official activity of the Church.

At this Centennial mile-post it is well to ask anew, What function does a Sunday school have in a church that places strong emphasis on catechism and desires that all its children shall attend Christian school? In 1884 it had already been maintained that Sunday school and catechism both had their place in instructing the youth of the church. What, then, is that place?

In the Christian Reformed Church the Sunday school has always been an institution which has encouraged Bible study through the use of the Bible itself as the specific textbook. To carry out that purpose a host of consecrated church members are kept busy week after week studying their Bibles, and they in turn are giving of the fruit of their study to their Sunday school scholars and are encouraging them to use and study their Bibles. Further, through intimate, personal contact over a period of weeks and months many a teacher has left a deep spiritual imprint on the student. That in turn has made the teacher conscious of the need of living a life of close communion and fellowship with God.

Not the least of the Sunday school's influence is its mission impact. Since it is much less formal in its worship and conduct than the church, it draws community children and adults more easily into its fold and often channels people into the church proper. In 1918 the Synod gave an important reason for the Sunday school's existence when it stated that the Sunday school can be justified as an agency in the church "only as a means of evangelism, and to this desirable work it must come into service more and more."

But, there is another reason for the Sunday school's existence. Some folk think that because their children attend church, catechism, and Christian school much of the Sunday school material is repetition. The fact

remains that the impact of modern life, with its worldly attractions and carnal allures, on our time and interests can well be counteracted in part by an added hour of Sunday school and by the united study of the lesson as a family during the week. We receive all too little Bible study in this day and if one of the church fathers some years ago recommended Sunday school because of the world in which he and his generation lived, we of this generation should be doubly serious to use the Sunday school as a spiritual influence.

What lies ahead for the Sunday school in our Church? Under God's blessing the Sunday school, with teachers becoming increasingly better educated and equipped to do a competent job of teaching, is going to increase in power and effectiveness. The Church is beginning to realize that in its total impact against sin and the world it will have to use every means at its disposal to educate and train covenantal students. In that project the Sunday school will grow in power.

Statistics vary, but we have read that thirty million children in the United States alone, excluding Canada, are unchurched. Even if this figure is an exaggeration, the fact remains that there are literally millions who do not confess Jesus Christ as their Savior and their Lord. In light of that situation the Sunday school has a tremendous task. With the growth of mission consciousness in the Church, our Sunday school will be used more and more as a spearhead for reaching the unchurched and the unsaved.

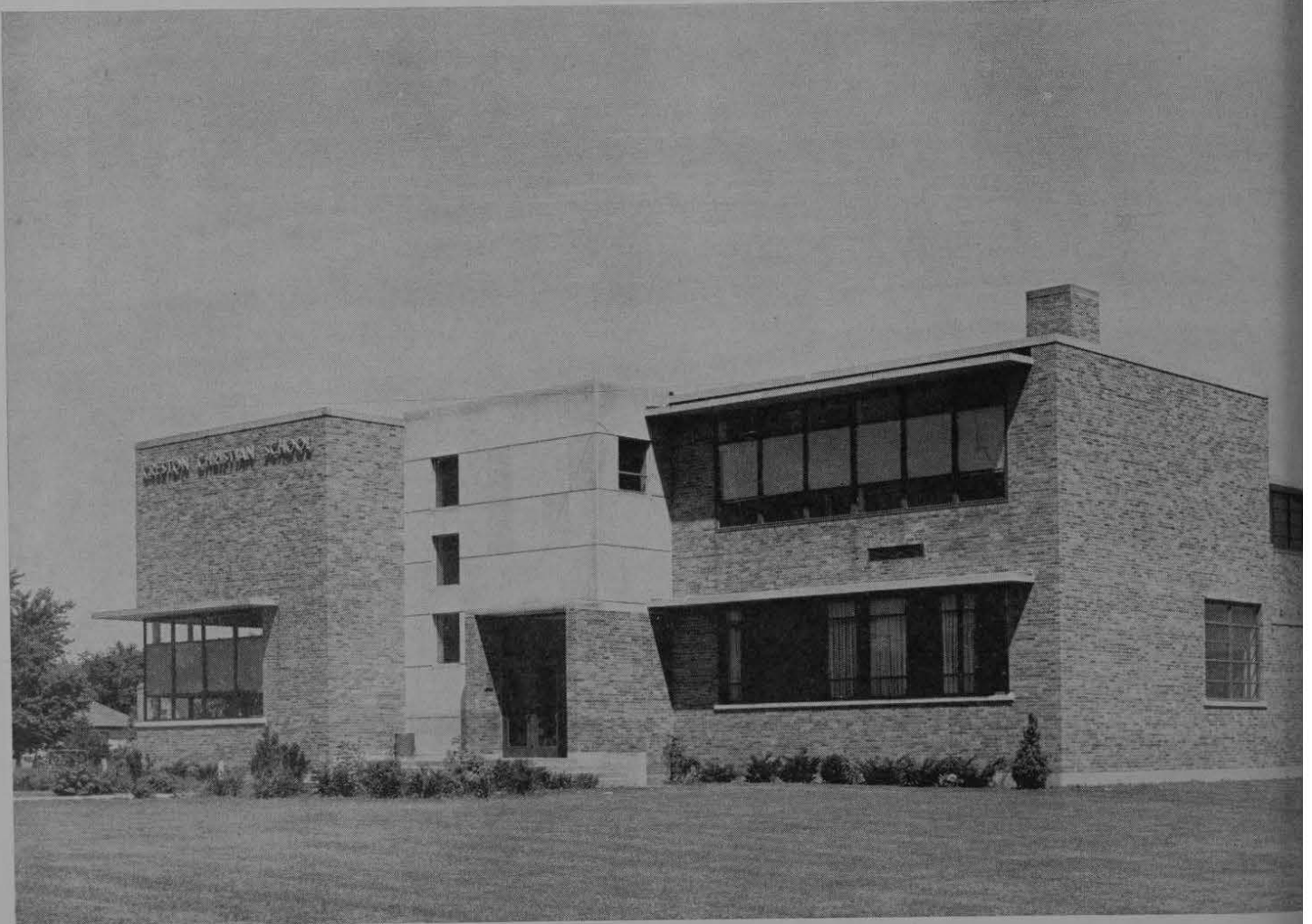
As to the effectiveness of the Sunday school God alone can judge, but at least 85 per cent of the converts who have come into the church through the Sunday school are still in the church five years later.

We who love this institution blessed of God have indeed a glorious task carved out for us in the future. In order to make the Sunday school an ever-increasing force, let us do our work with the best equipment and training possible in order that the God who has called us may be glorified through our work.

# THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL MOVEMENT



*Not only have the educational standards of our  
Christian schools advanced with the years,  
but significant progress has been made  
in the esthetic and functional design of  
our school buildings. This is  
the new Creston Christian School, Grand Rapids.*



## The Christian School Movement

By JOHN A. VANDER ARK

THE ROOTS of the Christian school movement are struck into the same soil as the roots of the Christian Reformed Church. The movement proliferated during the last decade but we must not think of Christian education as an emergence of the last few years nor even of the twentieth century.

The modern Christian school has an antecedent in the type of school operated by the Brethren of the Common Life prior to the Reformation. These schools were free from church control and were based on the principle that the truths of the Word of God and the truths that God reveals around us should be taught in harmony.

The Protestant Reformation renewed the concern for God-centeredness in all of life. The principal basis for Christian education continued, but the form naturally reflected

the social and ecclesiastic conditions of the centuries.

Historic Reformed synods of the State Church of the Netherlands enunciated the church's duty to establish schools and to supervise instruction in doctrine and piety. The Synod of 's Gravenhage in 1586 regarded education highly, as evidenced by Article 19, and composed regulations for schools. The great Synod of Dort (1618-1619) in Articles 21, 41, and 53 of its newly formulated Church Order perpetuated the call to faithfulness and also exerted some pressure upon future churches which would make a claim to orthodoxy. The church's responsibility to provide qualified teachers who shall subscribe to Reformed confessional standards and to review consistorial faithfulness to that provision at classical meetings was indelibly registered.

The seed-bed in which both the Christian Reformed Church and the Calvinistic Christian school germinated was the condition in the Netherlands which led to the Secession of 1834. Liberal tendencies in the established church and the gradual exclusion of Christian influence in the schools of the state were causes of grave dissatisfaction. Separation was the result. The attempts of seceders to establish schools of their own frequently were thwarted by civil authorities.

Frustrated by such a lack of freedom to educate their own children in free Christian schools, the separatists were conditioned to seek a more congenial environment in America. Thus the Christian school ideal became one of the prime reasons why many emi-

*The Williams Street School in Grand Rapids was built in 1875, and served as the Theological School as well as the Grammar School.*



grated from the Netherlands in 1847 and ensuing years.

Dr. A. Van Raalte personified the ideal. Historians unfortunately disagree on the relative importance of the influence of his dynamic leadership and the common background of the settlers. The people, however, were uneducated and weighted down with material concerns. For such reasons, their interest sometimes waned. It is safe to maintain that Van Raalte exerted tremendous



*This photo recalls the horse-and-buggy days of school transportation. Today modern buses carry pupils to centralized schools in many rural areas.*

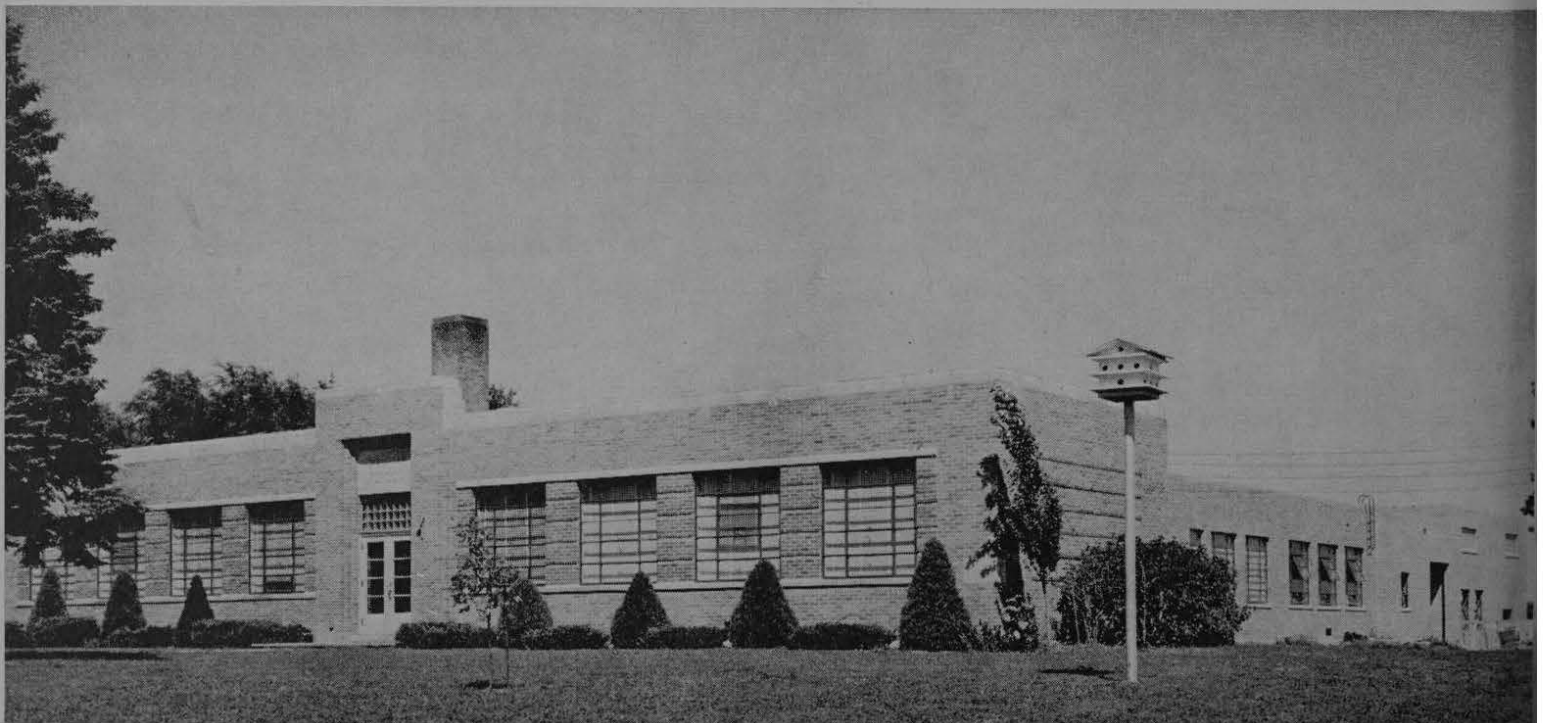


influence and that he envisioned the type of education which the Christian Reformed Church came to cherish.

The early Christian schools of the Christian Reformed Church were parochial out of necessity more than conviction. Leaders were firm in their belief that the existence and well-being of the church depended on the maintenance of Christian schools.

The instruction was given in the Dutch language and the emphasis unmistakably was on spiritual matters. To pass on a particular faith and heritage was the objective.

*The old and the new. Left, pupils and faculty at entrance of original Sioux Center Christian School building. Below—The beautiful new school at Sioux Center (Iowa) in 1957.*





*The Edgerton (Minnesota) Christian School, housed in this beautiful new building, is representative of progress in architecture and facilities.*

The General Meeting of the Christian Reformed Church of 1870 expressed the attitude of the leaders in these words, "The school is the nursery of and for the church. . . ."

The first continuous school was started in 1856 by the Second Reformed Church in Grand Rapids. In 1857 the seceders, led by Gysbert Haan, continued the school under the new church. The teacher, Mr. Adrian Pleune, was numbered with the seceders.

There were many discouragements. Instruction was inferior, teachers were poorly trained, equipment was inadequate and discipline was poor. In short, conditions were unfavorable for growth. Added to such liabilities was the lack of zeal for learning on the part of the settlers on account of bread and butter necessities.

In spite of handicaps, Christian education went forward through the sacrifices of teachers and loyal friends. But to renew its vitality the movement needed more than the plodding efforts of consecrated leaders who were restricted to the parochial type of school.

The further history of the Christian schools is a blending of influence from the Netherlands with the pioneering conditions in America. The Christian Reformed Church eventually came to realize the principle of the free Christian school after parochialism had had its course for about thirty years.

Sparked by the ideas of Groen Van Prinsterer that the parents are responsible for the education of their children, the politically sagacious theologian, Dr. Abraham Kuyper,

*Yesterday and today. The old Baldwin (Wisconsin) School building was replaced in 1955 by the modern structure below.*





*One of our most beautiful plants of learning, Eastern Christian High School, graces the bank of a wooded hill in North Haledon, New Jersey.*

exerted tremendous influence on Christian school growth within the matrix of the church. He defined the basis of Christian education in terms of the Covenant of Grace and gave the parent-society school its rationale in theology.

His crusading spirit was brought into America by the immigrants after 1886, who carried their convictions on education and the type of school as part of their way of life. This gave the Christian school movement a fresh impetus.

Among the immigrants of this period were professionally educated teachers who dignified the schools with their presence as they raised the quality of instruction. The European situation was a strong impetus in the 1890's and during the first two decades of the twentieth century.

Reference to the influence of the Netherlands is wholly incomplete without acknowledging the later contribution of Dr. Herman Bavinck, who gave professional character to Christian schools by a Christian approach to the instructional program.

The growth of Christian schools must not be attributed solely to motivation through direct contact with the free school movement in the Netherlands. In the first place, the process of Americanization contributed to the growth. Dutch had to be replaced by the language of the land. Interestingly, English was introduced by operating two schools in one. Many schools maintained a complete Dutch unit and a complete English unit. The administrative difficulties in this arrangement plus the demands of the American society hastened the conversion to all English instruction.

In the second place, the church took a stand on two issues which resulted in increased enrollments. The Synod of 1880 expressed itself regarding the desirability of having English Christian schools, and the Synod of 1892 recorded its preference for society schools.



### United Efforts

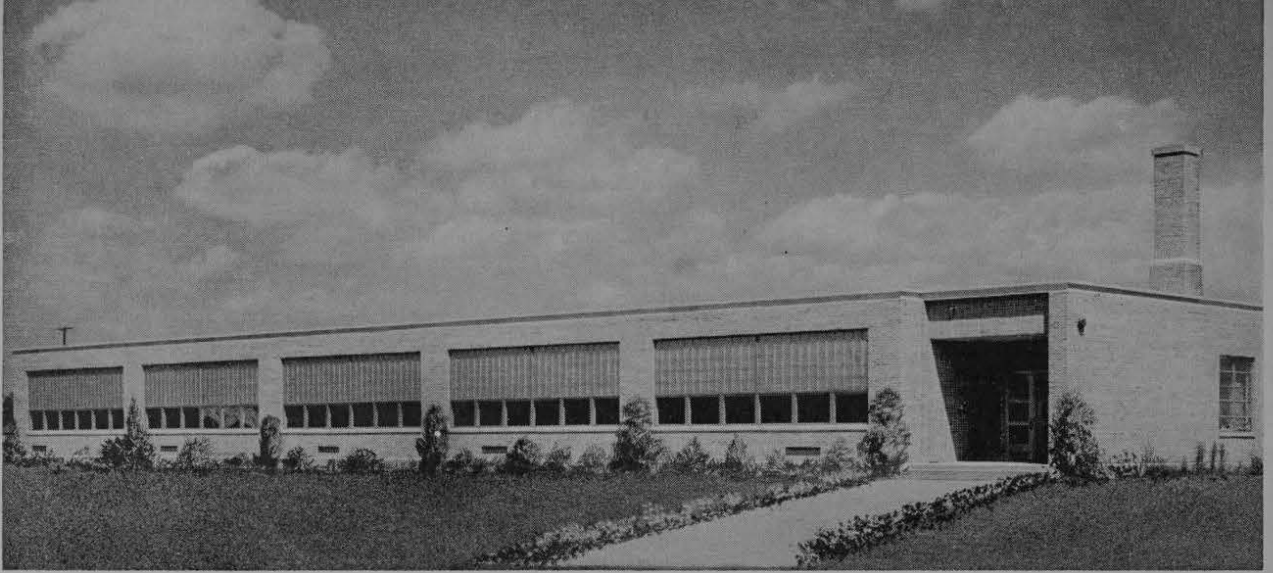
A significant factor in Christian school growth was the decision to unite existing schools in order to carry out a program. The Society for Christian Instruction on a Reformed Basis was organized in 1892 and embraced the ten or twelve schools in existence at that time. Strategically, at the first meeting a resolution was drawn up recommending that all Christian schools should be parent-society owned and operated. This hastened the shift from parochialism. The Michigan Alliance succeeded the original Union and other Alliances soon came into being. Out of the Chicago Alliance in 1920 the National Union of Christian Schools was born.

The National Union has been effective in propagating Christian schools and providing numerous services for teachers, boards, and societies. Since the birth of the Union, an official organ, at present called *Christian Home and School*, has been a means of developing Christian school-mindedness.

The Christian Reformed Church did not terminate efforts to promote the cause when the organization tended toward society control. Witness to this are the discussions and decisions of many synods. The synods of 1898, 1932, 1934, and 1936 are representative of those making official pronouncements. These expressions are exhortatory in character and apparently have helped to overcome one of the alleged obstacles to Christian school growth, namely, the indifference of many ministers to Christian schools.

Subsequently the emphasis in official church bodies shifted from the exhortatory to a more studied basis called the philosophy or principles of Christian education. The Synod of 1955 commended to the churches a statement of *Principles of Christian Education* which reaffirms the position of the church concerning education. Societies and other groups were urged to study it.

From the early beginnings of the Christian schools there has been an awareness of the need for competent teachers. Whether the church through its college or a society organ-



*The Unity Christian High School in Hudsonville (Michigan) typifies midwest school architecture.*

ized for Christian normal instruction should be responsible for the professional training of teachers was a much debated question. Eleven synods between 1896 and 1926 dealt with the issue.

School men in general agitated for a separate normal school. Some pointed to consistency as a principle. As societies operated schools, so they should prepare their own teachers. Some argued that normal training in a liberal arts college such as Calvin College would defeat the aims of the college.

An experiment in conducting a society-sponsored Christian normal school was begun in 1919 in the Franklin Street Christian School, Grand Rapids, but continued for only two years. Two Christian high schools, Chicago in 1918 and Western Academy, Hull, Iowa, in 1919, were organized with teacher education as one purpose for being. Ulti-

mately the opinion prevailed that the powers of a comparatively small constituency such as ours should not be dissipated but rather must be concentrated in a strong central college.

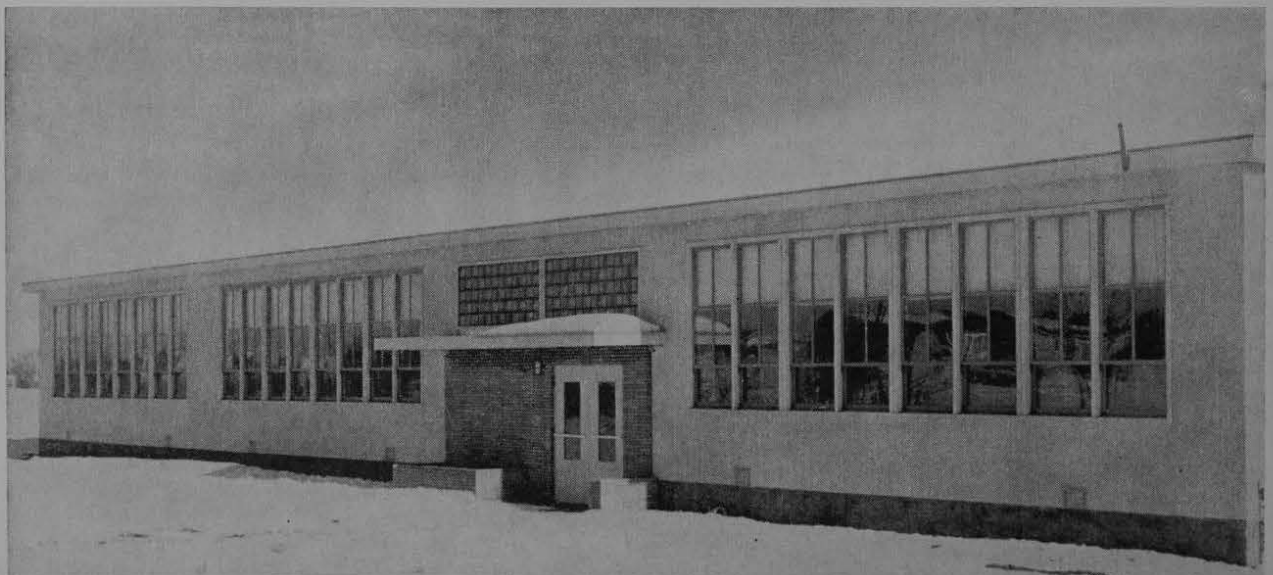
The issue was reopened with the founding of Dordt College, 1955, in Sioux Center, Iowa.

### **More Recent Development**

The years following World War II witnessed a signal growth in schools. This reflects the prosperity of the times, no doubt, but also the conviction on the necessity of Christian education.

A phenomenal growth began in the 1940's. The reasons are several and somewhat difficult to list. However, the fact that public education became increasingly secular and in

*The Christian School at Edmonton, Alberta, is one of many new schools appearing in the Canadian Provinces.*



many communities lacking in quality was an important factor. The roots of these weaknesses go deep. They indicate a forsaking of biblical truth as a standard for thinking and acting, and the lack of goals and purposiveness in education as advocated by Dewey and his followers.

The Christian schools through educational accomplishments have commanded respect and support. The buildings and equipment are much improved; in fact, they are as good as those of many public schools.

During this school year, 1956-1957, 37,500 pupils are enrolled in the 196 schools in the United States and Canada which are members of the National Union of Christian Schools. These pupils are taught by 1351 full time teachers.

It is interesting to observe that of the 1351 teachers employed in 1955-56, 625 have a Bachelor's degree, 201 have a Master's degree, and 3 have a Doctor's degree.

### **The Extent of the Church's Participation**

Recognizing that the enrollment of Christian schools is not limited to children of the Christian Reformed Church, we can nevertheless report that attendance reflects the growth of the church and actually increases in greater proportion than the church population. In 1950, sixty per cent of families with school-going children sent them to a Christian school. In 1950, 250 out of 341 congregations had children in Christian schools. Thirty-eight Canadian churches were



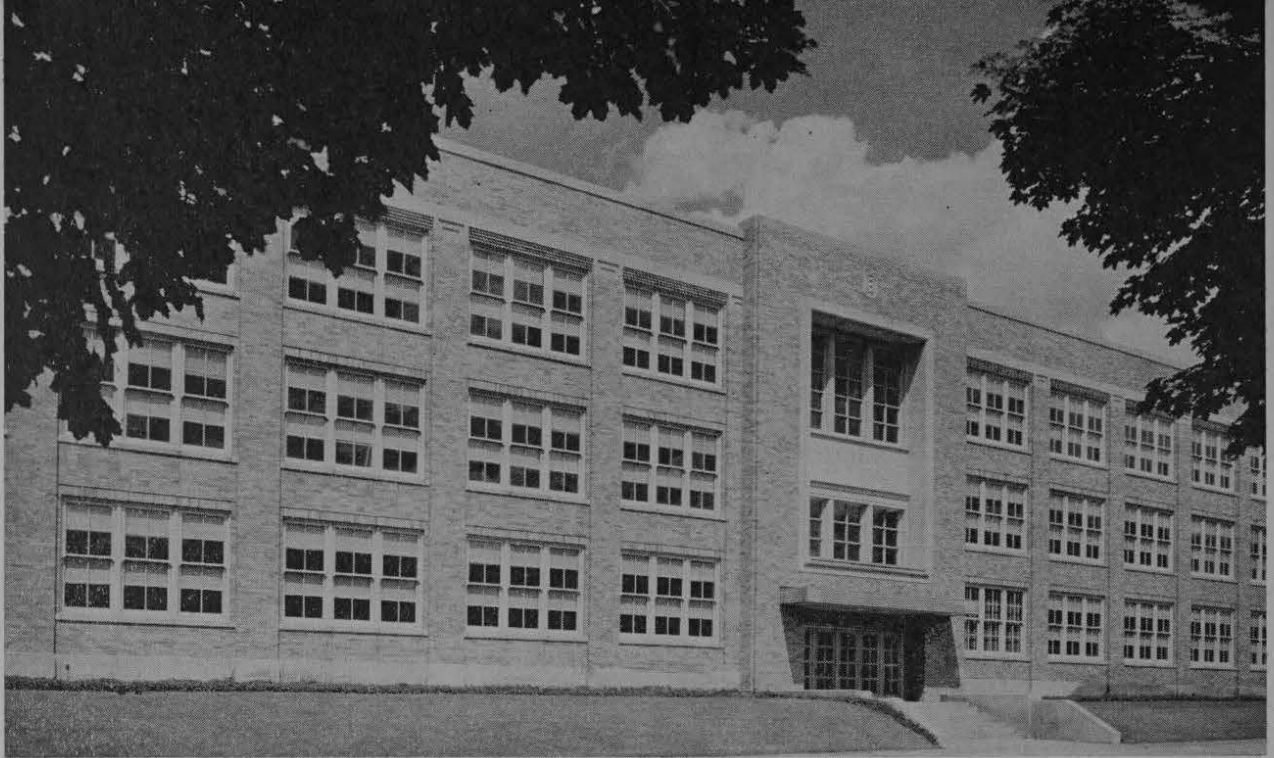
*Shown above is the old building of the Baldwin Christian School in Grand Rapids, built in 1909. In 1955 a beautiful, modern school building was dedicated in a new location, and renamed Mayfield Christian School.*

included in the survey. Four of these had children in Christian schools and four other churches embraced Christian school societies. Two hundred forty-six out of 303 congregations in the United States had children in Christian schools. Fifty-seven congregations did not have children in Christian schools, but of these fifty-seven, twenty-one had Christian school societies.

In 1956, 327 out of 481 churches had children attending Christian schools. Three hundred and two out of the 362 churches in the United States had children in Christian schools. Of the sixty churches not having children in Christian schools, thirty had a Christian school society. Canada had twenty-

*The lovely lines of Spanish architecture mark this Christian School in Hanford, California.*





*Grand Rapids Christian High School claims the highest enrollment of any of our schools.*

five churches out of 119 with children in Christian schools, or about ninety-four churches without schools. Of these ninety-four, forty-eight churches have Christian school societies.

Percentage of Christian Reformed pupils in Christian schools compared to other denominations (1950)

Christian Reformed .....	81 %
Protestant Reformed .....	4.4%
Reformed Church of America.....	7.7%
Orthodox Presbyterian .....	.9%
All others .....	4.8%

### **Economic Support**

Because Christian schools are supported by private contributions and because almost all of the Christian Reformed congregations, large or small, rural or urban, have schools to support, the financial obligation of the members is considerable. The annual cost of operation alone of the National Union member schools, elementary and secondary, for the year 1956-57 is approximately \$6,500,000.00. Only through industrious habits, productive economic life, and a sense of stewardship can these supporters provide such funds.

### **Educational Frontier**

If education is to stay alive it must have a frontier. One frontier on the American education scene today is the adjustment of the individual to the group. That is certainly not the frontier of Christian education.

We have explained quite well why we do not rally to public education. We have explained to our own satisfaction the reasons for maintaining separate schools. We have exploited the implications of the Covenant of Grace. Having battled for a place in the educational world we have phrased these implications in favorite expressions which have taken on the characteristics of cliches: "The objective of Christian education is to teach the child to recognize the God-centered pattern of reality." "Man's project is to build the Kingdom of God." "The objective is to make the child more expressive of the image of God."

Our frontier deals with the explication of subject matter, but it is not limited to that. Our purpose is to relate all subject matter to God the Creator and Redeemer. And, furthermore, in doing this, to seek to form the personalities of the children, mindful that they

are created in the likeness of God; that is, to lead them toward the fulness of stature in Christ which is the will of God for all his children.

To realize these objectives the National Union of Christian Schools has launched a Christian textbook and manual program. The manuals are a means to help the Christian teacher think out the cogent, defensible application of truths. The textbooks provide the child directly with tools that embody the Christian approach to his subject matter, so that what he reads and studies is in harmony with what he hears—in the classroom, at home, and in the church.

Publication of Christian instructional materials is an expensive venture. The projects are being financed by the Christian School Educational Foundation, an agency which is specifically set up to receive monies in various ways.

### Conclusion

It may emphatically be said that the Christian schools are an outgrowth of the covenant idea. Christian education enables the child to appreciate his covenant blessings and obligations. He understands more fully the significance of his baptism in the name of the triune God.

This position indicates the unity of the Christian Reformed Church and the Christian school movement. Although separate in organization the institutions are harmonious in purpose. The Church has mothered, supported, and supervised to a certain extent,



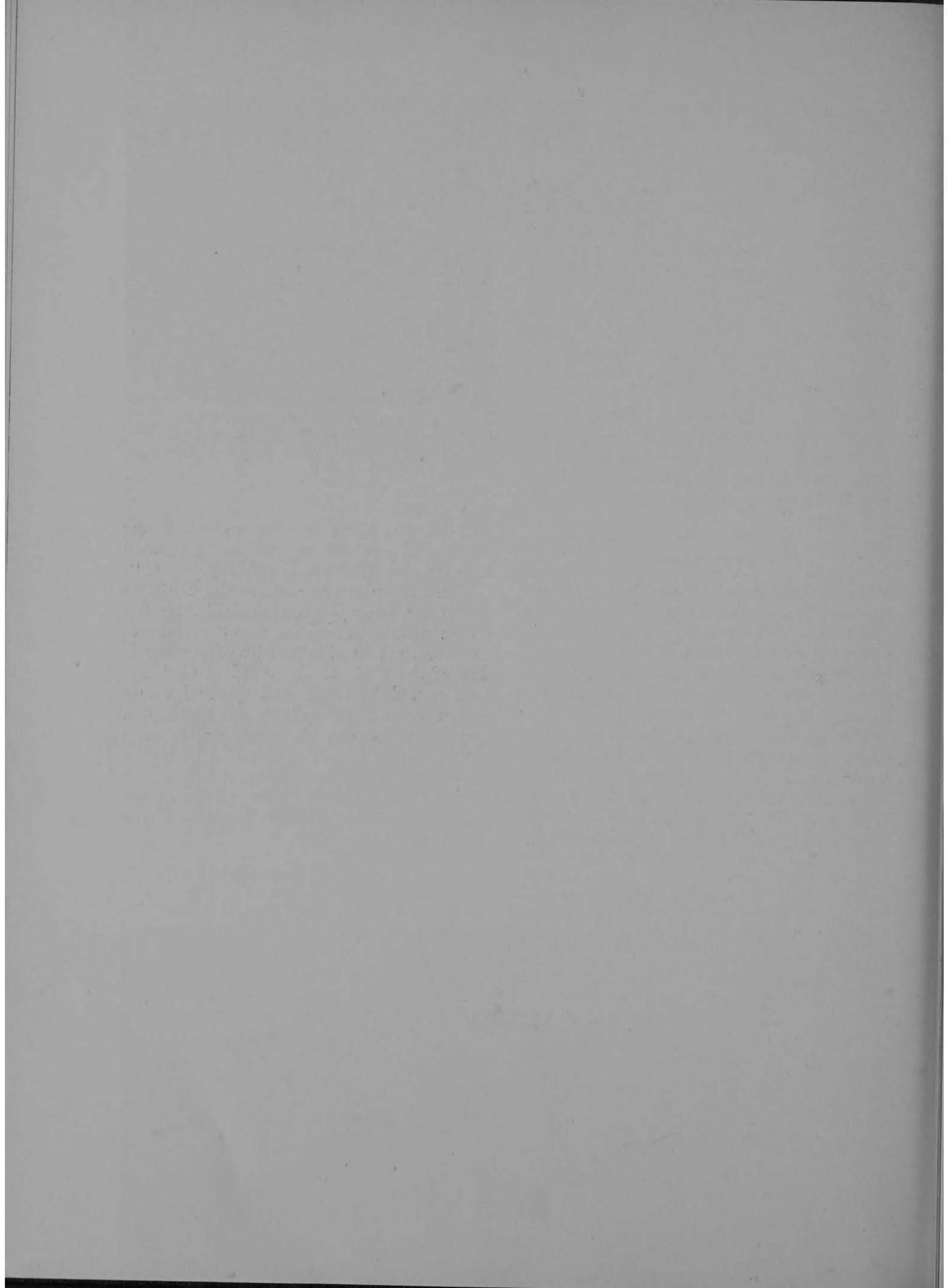
*A sampling of the textbooks and manuals published by the National Union of Christian Schools.*

and insisted upon the importance of the school. The school in turn has generated love for and loyalty to the church.

These co-ordinate efforts in the Christian school movement are commendable. Here is a demonstration of mutual devotion and sacrifice on the part of adherents. The recognition of the Bible as the Word of God, the high regard for moral and spiritual values rooted in the Christian faith and way of life, and for the mastery of knowledge are noteworthy. Here is a demonstration of how a cause having denominational sanction and pressure may continue. Here is truly a demonstration of what "an idea let loose in the world" can accomplish.

*The nerve center of the National Union of Christian Schools is located on Twenty-eighth St., Grand Rapids.*





# OUR CALVINISTIC YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS



*Michigan Young Calvinist Youth Rally.*



## Our Calvinistic Youth Organizations

By MR. RICHARD POSTMA

**I**T SEEMS fitting to give some space in this Centennial to the Calvinistic youth movement. A Church which recognizes the great importance of the Covenant and regards children and young people as members of the church cannot fail to be vitally interested in its youth and their organizations. Such a church realizes that among the educational and training agencies the youth organizations occupy an important and unique place.

As early as 1870 young men in Grand Rapids, Michigan, organized a society. Soon that example was followed by young men in other churches. Such organizations were not welcomed everywhere and by everybody. They were something new. "I sometimes think that formerly we did not have such societies and that our forefathers never had them in the church," one writer in the official church paper asserted. Others argued that such societies are useful because they induce young people to study, develop their ability to think, and they keep them safely occupied.

As the societies increased in number the desire to combine them into larger units became evident. In Grand Rapids the first attempt in that direction was made in 1885. Success did not come till 1894. Then the *Gereformeerde Jongelings Bond of Grand Rapids* came into existence. In 1917 the



*Some of the 4000 Young Calvinists who attended the 1956 Convention in Hamilton, Ontario.*

*Bond* was succeeded by the *Young Men's League* and the *Circle of Young Ladies' Societies*. At that time there also was in Chicago an organization known as *Young People's Alliance of the Reformed and Christian Reformed Churches of Chicago*. It had succeeded *Gereformeerde Bond van Illinois*, organized in 1893. Similar organizations existed in Muskegon, Holland, and the East. *The Year-book of Youth Societies*, published in 1892, supplied the information that at that time 35 young men's societies and 33 ladies' societies existed. It did not mention the number of young people's societies.

### A Federation is Born

The third week of September, 1919, was an important week in the history of the Calvinistic youth movement. During that week representatives of young men's societies of Grand Rapids, Holland, and Chicago met in Grand Rapids to discuss the desirability and possibility of organizing a denomination-wide federation of young men's societies. A motion to organize such a federation was proposed and unanimously adopted. Then began the work of writing the constitution and by-laws. Hour after hour the men worked in closest harmony. When the constitution was finally written it was decided to present it to the delegating societies for approval. Thus the new organization was born. It was

named *American Federation of Reformed Young Men's Societies*. A governing board was elected which consisted of Rev. Herman Hoeksema, president; Richard Postma, vice-president; Rev. J. P. Battema, secretary; Gerald Monsma, treasurer; and Ben Iwema, corresponding secretary.

That evening the Grand Rapids League held a meeting. Visitors from Chicago and Holland were present. Those in attendance were told, "You have been informed regarding your new organization. Remember that this Federation at present is one on paper only. Your societies must ratify the proposed constitution. And then you must get behind the movement. It is not enough that your leaders are enthusiastic. *You* must be filled with enthusiasm and love for the cause. Working together we shall be able to do great things for our Church and country. May the Lord bless our efforts. With God, Forward!"

In that spirit the movement was launched. There were many difficulties and obstacles which the new Federation had to overcome. There were those who considered time and effort spent on it wasted. They lacked vision and idealism. There were others who favored cooperation with organizations of a general Christian character. Their attitude was due to lack of love for a specifically Reformed youth movement. There was also the difficulty of uniting societies scattered over many states of the Union and even Canada. That was the difficulty caused by distance, provincialism, and lack of finances. But those difficulties were not insurmountable. They



*Young People's Rally, Nova Scotia, The Maritimes.*

*Young Calvinist Federation officials meet with leaders of the Ontario Young People's League.*





*When Young Calvinists meet for consultation and inspiration.*

did not deter the men who were convinced that for the preservation of the Reformed character and the welfare of the youth of the church a truly Calvinistic youth movement was not only desirable but also necessary.

### **The Growth of the Movement**

The federation grew slowly at first, but then at an ever-increasing tempo. The first two years the organization enjoyed the leadership of Rev. Herman Hoeksema. When he resigned, Rev. Henry J. Kuiper took over. When in 1930 the press of work made it impossible for him to continue, Richard Postma, who had served as vice-president since the day of organization, was elected president. He continued in office until 1946 when he accepted the appointment as federation director. Since then Dr. Clarence De Graaf has served as president. To these and many others we owe a debt of gratitude for their devoted service rendered to the cause of youth. The services of John Hofstra, who for many years has functioned as secretary

and Young Calvinist manager, deserve special mention.

During all the years of its existence the Federation has labored in the interest of the youth of the Church. When in 1932 the *American Federation of Reformed Young Women's Societies* was organized, that labor became a co-operative effort. From that date the two Federations became jointly responsible for the publication of our monthly, *The Young Calvinist*, and many other publications and activities. Month after month, through the medium of the official organ, valuable material was presented for the Bible Study and the after-recess program. Under the leadership, first of Miss Johanna Timmer and then of Mrs. Tillie Jaarsma, that organization worked hand in hand with the older Federation to build Calvinistic youth and prepare them for the task God has given his people.

### **A United Movement**

Circumstances and cooperation led to the desire to effect an organization that would



*Two of the three tents in which we slept in Germany.*



*Young Calvinist Club in Germany.*

serve not a segment but *all* of the youth of the Church. Especially two influences have been responsible for the desire to have the two Federations merge into one. From the very beginning there have been three types of youth organizations in our denomination. There were societies whose membership was limited to young men and also those whose membership was limited to young women. But there also were organizations, known as Young People's Societies, which admitted young people from both sexes. As time went on, the number of Young People's Societies increased at a much faster pace than the other two. To fit these Young People's societies into the framework of the existing Federations was difficult and awkward. Either a third Federation or a combined Federation for the three kinds of societies appeared to be the solution. The second alternative was chosen.

For many years a combined committee of the two Federations studied the problem. In 1955 the recommendations of that committee were presented to the conventions of the two Federations. These recommendations were adopted. During the Centennial Year the "marriage" of the two Federations will be consummated. When the two conventions meet in Chicago during the same week in August the newly elected Board will take over. The two Federations will disappear from the scene. The *Young Calvinist Federation of North America* will carry on.

The rapid increase of youth societies in

Canada during the past decade has been another contributing factor in the formation of the new Federation. The immigration which followed World War II brought thousands of young Calvinists to Canada. In the newly organized churches, youth societies sprang into existence. From the very beginning the most amicable relationship existed between those immigrants and their young brothers and sisters in the States. Unimportant differences were easily overcome. The strong opinion and desire of young people on both sides of the border to form and maintain one organization easily prevailed. Frequent consultation between leaders of the movement in Canada and the United States caused that feeling to remain strong. We understood one another. And today we have an organization which embraces the young Calvinists of both countries. The 1956 Convention, held in Hamilton, Ontario, presented eloquent evidence of the fact that as far as the youth of the Christian Reformed Church is concerned the tie that binds is lasting and strong.

\* \* \* \*

To the Calvinistic youth movement, including the recently organized *Calvinist Cadet Corps*, the Christian Reformed Church is truly grateful.

Grateful for labors performed in the interest of the youth through giving guidance and direction.

Grateful for the invaluable service rendered during World War II to the young

men and women of Canada and the United States who were engaged in the struggle for country and liberty.

Grateful for helping to keep our youth loyally devoted to the precious Reformed heritage.

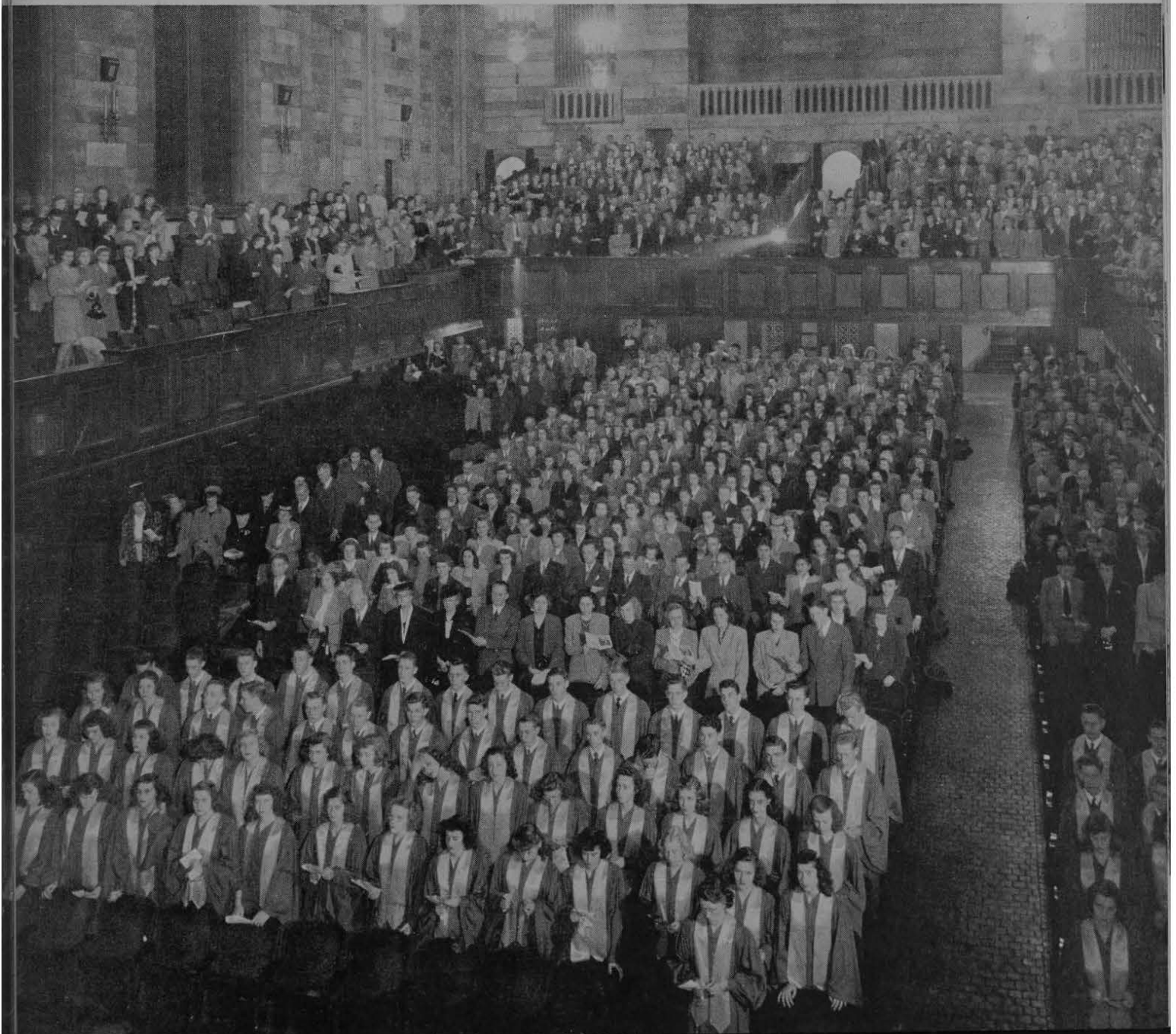
Grateful for the training of our youth for service in the Church and for Christian testimony in the community.

May these organizations in the years that lie ahead be ever faithful to their high calling in a rapidly changing world under conditions that are in many respects so different from what they were when the movement

started. May they ever answer to their purpose, so well expressed in the preamble to their constitution:

"Recognizing the desirability and necessity of uniting the youth of Calvinistic churches for service in the Kingdom of God, and the need of guidance and direction in this work in order that the youth of the church, as well-prepared servants of the Lord, may recognize Jesus Christ as King and serve Him always and everywhere, the Young Calvinist Federation of North America is established."

*One of the Youth Rallies held in Grand Rapids, Michigan.*

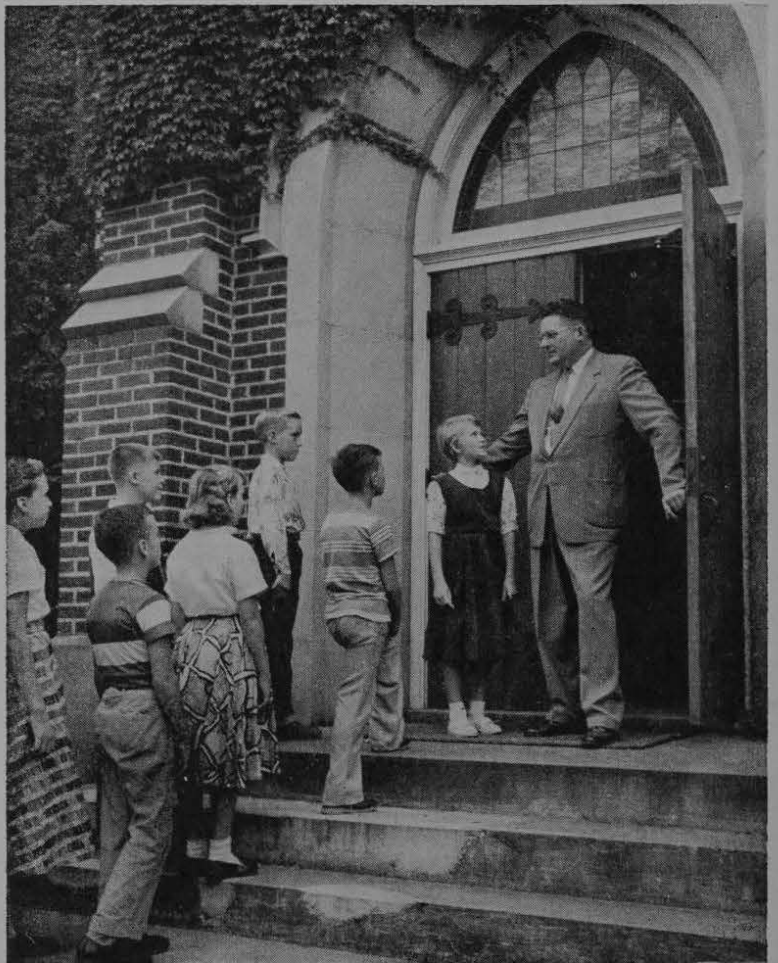




# THE MINISTRY OF MERCY IN THE CHURCH



*"And whosoever shall give to drink  
unto one of these little ones  
a cup of cold water only  
...verily I say unto you he shall  
in no wise lose his reward."*



## The Ministry of Mercy in the Church

By RALPH HEYNEN

**I**N THE first half of the twentieth century the church has laid a great deal of emphasis on her social responsibilities. These years have been years of considerable stress in the world's history, resulting in severe conflicts in the personal lives of men, women, and children. Since the church has been cast ever increasingly into the stream of humanity she cannot just "pass by on the other side," but she must face the tremendous task of helping to find a solution to life's problems. This has forced her to develop a dynamic form of Christianity, one in which the great doctrines of the Bible must be translated into practical life situations.

In obedience to the Savior, and following his example, the church has ever sought to alleviate the woes of life. For many years an effective agency has been found in the office of deacons. Even though every member of the Church is called to be a priest, the special office of the diaconate represents in an official way the High-priestly work of Jesus. Through this office the church has ever increasingly become a channel which carries the heaven-sent compassion of a loving Lord to our fellow-members in need. No other organization on earth can point to a record of loving concern for the downtrodden which can equal that of the Church of Christ.

The important change that has taken place in the first half of this century is that Christian mercy has assumed a more dynamic form. In such an age as this, it is not enough merely to show loving concern or to give

only token assistance. With many highly skilled agencies active in the humanitarian work of the world, the church may not be content to take a secondary place in caring for her needy ones. True concern for others demands that we reach out a strong and lov-

*The work at Cutlerville began in 1911 in this humble building which for seven years constituted the entire hospital.*





*The new Pine Rest building provides an impressive entrance to the beautiful grounds.*

ing hand to these "wrestlers with life's troubled sea."

### **A Co-operative Venture**

In carrying out this great and challenging task it has become more and more evident that it is not possible for a local church to do this work single-handed. When it comes to the broader phases of the work, such as the care of the sick, the handicapped, the aged, the orphans, we must join hands with others who have the same ideals and purposes. It is on this basis that many agencies and institutions have been organized in co-operation with other Reformed Churches. In these organizations the Christian Reformed Church has always played a major role. The spirit of devotion to duty and sacrificial giving has been manifested by our congregations. Many of our leading ministers and laymen have given inspiration and guidance in these efforts.

At the turn of the century a special impetus seemed to move some of our leaders to

*At close of day, we join these little ones before the throne of grace as they offer their prayers to God.*



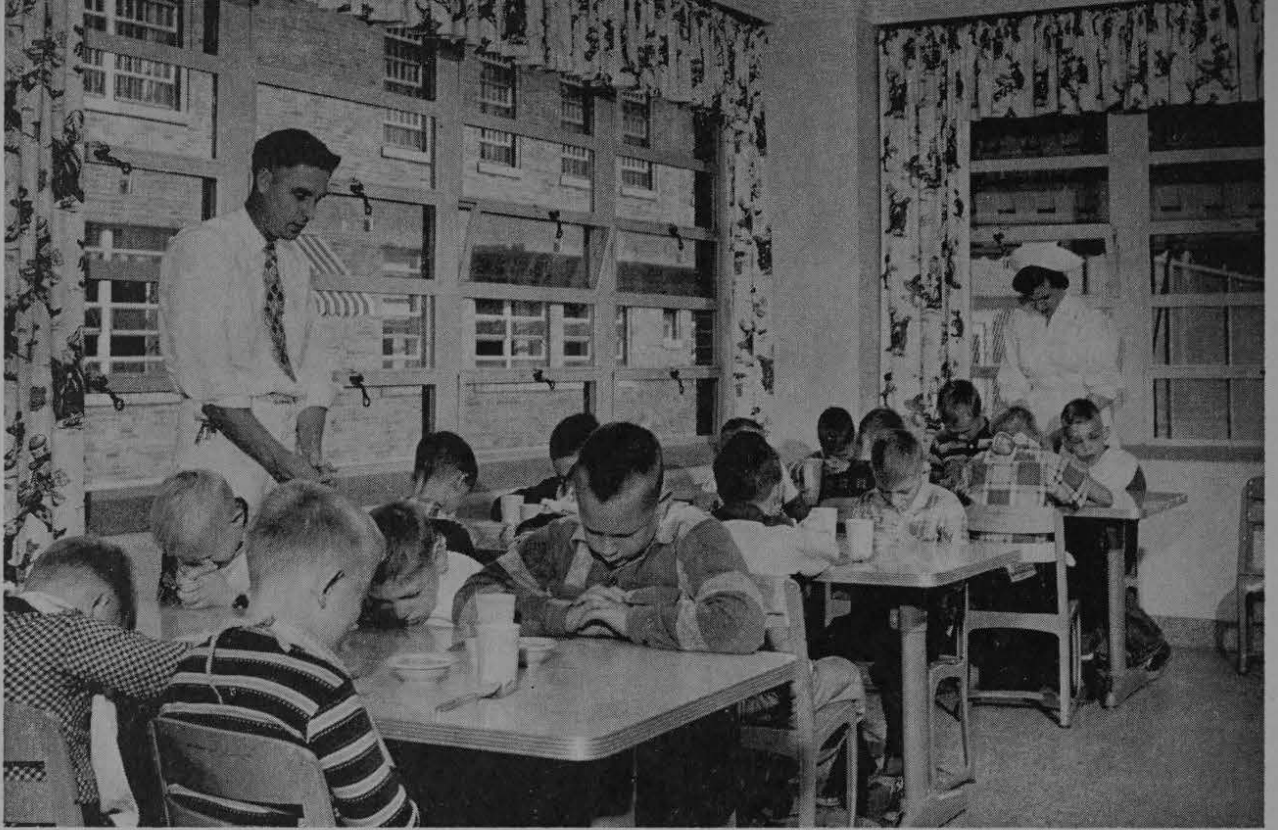
publicize their views on this subject. Most of these men and women had witnessed some of the fine institutions which had been built by our Reformed brethren in The Netherlands. Rev. Idzerd Van Dellen, Rev. Peter Jonker, Sr., and Rev. John Keizer all wrote extensive articles on the subject of Christian mercy. They laid down many basic principles and called the church to action. The Rev. Mr. Van Dellen later published his findings in a book entitled, "The Ministry of Mercy."

It remained however for one of our mothers to write an article which possibly did more to stir our people into action than any written previously. She was Mrs. J. Robbert, the wife of the minister of the First Christian Reformed Church at Kalamazoo. She felt a burden upon her heart born out of the experiences which she had while calling on patients at the State Mental Hospital in her city. She wrote of these experiences and then made a fervent plea for a Christian mental hospital with Christian doctors and nurses working side by side with a minister. With remarkable insight she wrote in 1905 of the great value of the Christian faith, not only to console and comfort, but also as a means to help these sufferers on the road to recovery. Mrs. Robbert has lived to see many of these fine ideals realized in the institutions which we have today.

When Clifford Beers wrote his book, "The Mind That Found Itself" in 1910 he made a great impact on the care given in mental hospitals. This important book was also instrumental in organizing the Mental Health movement. But actually, at that time the Reformed Churches were already well on their way to establishing hospitals of their own. In fact, the seed had been planted and

*A congenial atmosphere for homeless children is found at Bethany Home. Every Sunday morning, children attend divine worship services and Sunday School.*

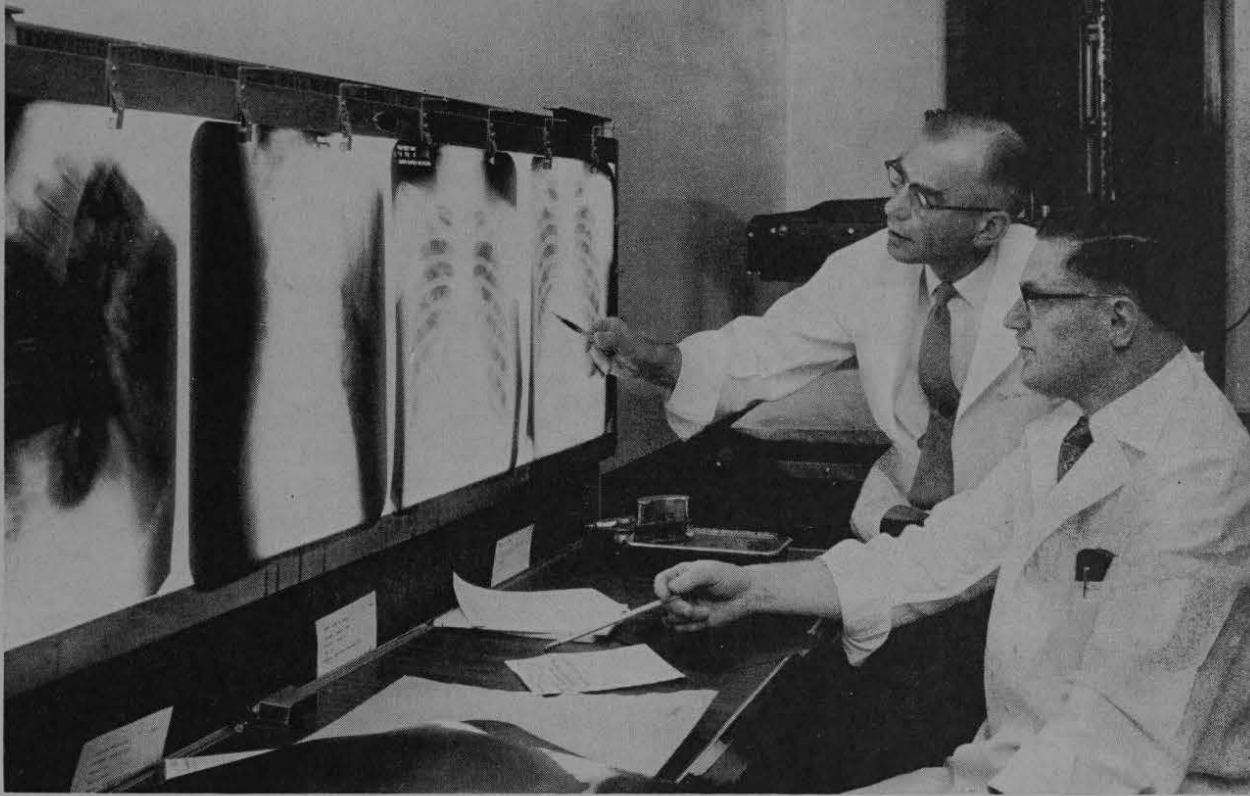




*Although absent from their families, the children are trained to carry on devotions at the dinner table in the Children's Retreat.*

*Progress may be slow in an academic class at the Children's Retreat, but teachers trained in this special field find the work rewarding.*





*Two staff doctors carefully study an x-ray to determine whether a patient has some organic condition underlying his mental illness.*

three hospitals were ready to sprout forth at that time.

### **Bethesda**

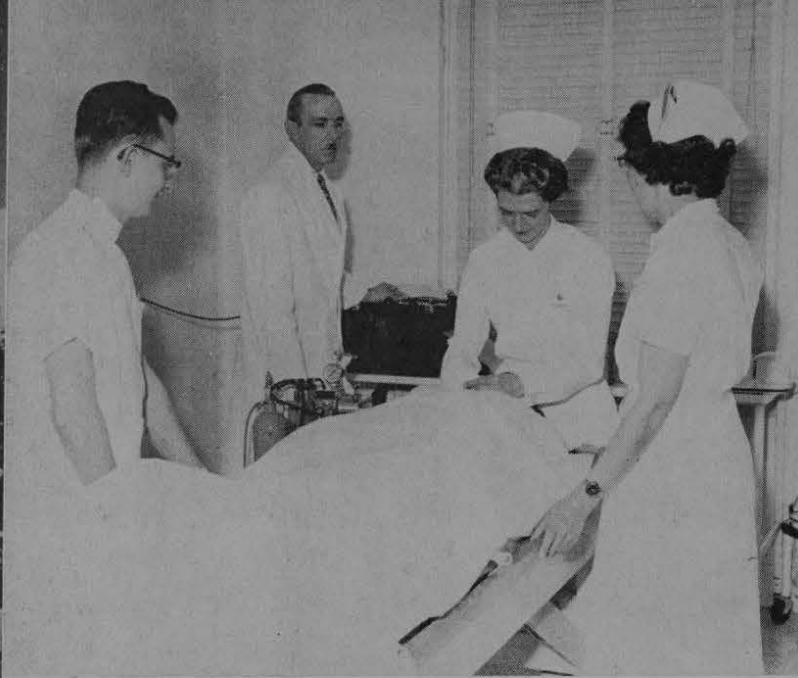
A few years before that date Bethesda Sanatorium had begun its work in an adobe home in Maxwell City, New Mexico. Under the inspiring leadership of Rev. Idzerd Van Dellen this institution was moved to a beautiful setting in the outskirts of the city of Denver, Colorado. For many years this fine Sanatorium, located near the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, served the needs of our people who suffered from the dread illness, tuberculosis, and other diseases of the chest. As time moved on, medical science developed newer methods of treatment for this disease, and it was no longer felt that climate and altitude were a factor in its cure. So in 1949 Bethesda was converted into a psychiatric hospital. Today it provides complete psychiatric care and treatment for 50 patients, under the capable leadership of Dr. K. Kuiper.

### **Pine Rest**

In the same year that Bethesda moved to Denver, the Christian Psychopathic Hospital

*Under the supervision of doctors, little babes at the Retreat receive tender and skilled nursing care.*





*A valuable means in leading many patients at Bethesda to recovery are the electro-ionic treatments, given by the director of the sanitorium.*

began its work at Cutlerville, one of the suburbs of Grand Rapids, Michigan. The first efforts were feeble and small so that for seven years the entire hospital was housed in a large home. But beginning in 1918 there was a sudden turn, and from then on the hospital has experienced a rapid and steady growth.

Today it is incorporated as the Pine Rest Christian Association and constitutes a village of healing for some 540 patients. Actually, in this Association, there are four units of operation, covering various phases of the work. Pine Rest Sanitarium is a treatment center for those who suffer from mild mental breakdowns and nervous illnesses. The two buildings of the Christian Psychopathic Hospital provide care and treatment for more active psychotic patients. The nursing homes for the aged give splendid facilities for those who suffer mental confusion due to advancing years. The Children's Retreat and Training School is a hospital-school unit for mentally retarded youngsters.

For 34 years of its history this hospital has been privileged to have the capable guidance of Dr. Jacob D. Mulder as superintendent and medical director. He is now retired from this position. A staff of five physicians strives to blend the best in modern medicine with a sound Reformed world and life view to lead many on the road back to health.

*The invigorating climate calls many of the patients out of doors at Bethesda, which is beautifully situated by the foothills of the Rocky Mountains.*



## Christian Sanatorium

By some unexplainable working of Providence, our churches in the eastern states were energetically working to obtain a psychiatric hospital at the same time that our people in Grand Rapids were making similar plans. Shortly after Pine Rest began its work the foundations were laid for the Christian Sanatorium at Goffle Hill, near Paterson, New Jersey. On a lofty hill overlooking the wooded countryside, a beautiful and well-planned hospital was planted. Its primary concern was to provide Christian psychiatric care for our people along the eastern shores.

This institution also carried on its work through some very trying years, but today it stands as a monument to the devotion and loyalty of Christian men and women, who counted it their duty to give the best in Christian psychiatric care and treatment to some 150 patients.

### An Active Program

It would be a mistake, however, to look upon these three hospitals as places where sympathetic care is given, and little more. When we speak of them as institutions of mercy we might leave that impression. It is true that a genuine warmth of Christian love is felt there, that the cup of cold water is extended in the name of Christ. These hospitals are staffed with nurses who are recruited from among our own constituency so that a congenial spirit is prevalent.

But we must learn to look upon this work as a dynamic expression of the Christian faith. It is a matter of putting our Reformed principles into practice in life situations. The latest in medical skills, the newest in drugs and treatments, and the best methods of therapy are employed, but always blended with our distinct view of life. It is here that the importance of Christian psychiatry comes into play. A psychiatrist deals not only with vital organs of the human body, he deals with the patient's fundamental view of life, with moral standards and religious ideals. Thus our Christian hospitals find their place in the orb of our kingdom activities, and com-



*For a child at the Retreat, classes in socialization precede an academic class.*

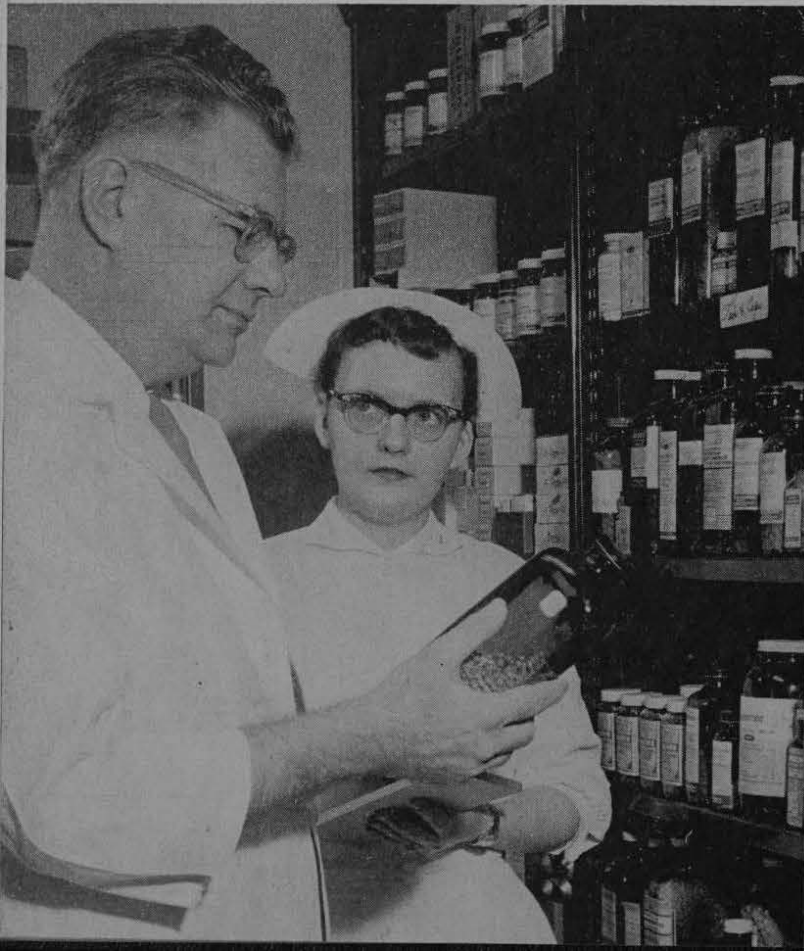
*Children who will "never grow up" have a special need for safety lessons.*





*Children with physical handicaps at Elim Christian School need special equipment such as a whirl-pool bath.*

*A doctor and a nurse at Pine Rest select one of the many newer drugs which have been most helpful in the treatment of mental illnesses.*



plement the diaconal functions of the Church of Jesus Christ.

In addition to the psychiatrists on the staff you will also find trained pastors who minister to the spiritual needs of the patients. They conduct services in the hospital chapels and give counsel and advice in matters religious and moral. Christian social workers and psychologists, who strive to interpret life along the lines of our world and life view, also find their place on the staff. The nursing staff forms a most important part of this healing team. To this end nurses' training courses are given, and young men and women are especially trained to serve in our Christian hospitals. In this way these institutions seek to strengthen the faith of our suffering brothers and sisters, and do all they can to lead them to a better adjusted view of life. The purpose is not just to treat the disease, but to treat the patient that has the disease; for true healing involves the whole individual.

### **Schools for Handicapped Children**

A much newer venture along kindred lines is that carried on with children. There are two schools provided for the handicapped. The Elim Christian School for exceptional children is located in the vicinity of Chicago near the Village of Worth, Illinois. Here

Christian education is given to children with physical handicaps, such as the blind, the deaf, the hard of hearing, those suffering with muscular dystrophy or other crippling handicaps. Many of these children have normal mentality but, due to their physical difficulties, need special training and education.

A splendid trained staff of teachers has been organized to teach them according to accepted modern methods of training. Much technical equipment has been installed to aid in this accomplishment. The constant call for expansion of facilities has amply demonstrated the great need for such a school in our circles.

The other school for the handicapped is the Children's Retreat and Training School, found on the spacious campus of the Pine Rest Christian Association. This is indeed a retreat for the mentally handicapped child.

Since this is a hospital-school institution, no child is counted too severely handicapped for placement here. One unit of the building is set aside for the nursery where infants and physically dependent children are cared for. In other wings of the building a trained staff of teachers, two staff psychologists, and a number of devoted nurses are actively engaged in developing these youngsters to the fullest possible capacities. Many are so severely retarded that only a measure of socialization is possible, while others can join in academic class work, and some make surprising gains. The entire program of activity is permeated with the spirit of Christian love and devotion.

### Bethany Christian Home

This same dynamic expression of the Christian faith can be seen in other institutions and agencies which form an important adjunct to the work of the church. For the child which is bereft of his parents, or for children born out of wedlock, a splendid agency has been established in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

*For the more dependent, senile women patients at Pine Rest, a large, airy, and spotless ward is provided.*





*Patients visiting the pleasant library at the Christian Sanatorium in Wyckoff, New Jersey, find that a good book is indeed a good friend.*

The Bethany Christian Home provides complete care for such children.

For those who need group boarding care, Bethany operates a residence where children between the ages of 5 and 17 years are placed in a home-like, Christian atmosphere. Rolling hills and a variety of trees make for pleasant surroundings. The children attend Christian schools and churches in the area.

Mindful of the fact that the ideal for each child is to be placed in a normal home relationship, the Bethany Home provides foster care for many of these children, particularly those below two years of age. This agency is also licensed to place children in adoptive homes. In this way children are led into the waiting arms of loving parents who will continue to give Christian nurture and care.

A helping hand is also given to unwed mothers. At a time when society tends to reject them, the Bethany Agency gives loving guidance and counsel. This sympathetic as-

*Both men and women nurses are needed in our Christian hospitals where training a good nursing staff is an important part of the work.*

*The difficult art of reading Braille is taught at Elim School, where the deaf, hard of hearing, and blind receive a special education.*





sistance is often instrumental in leading such mothers to a deeper love for the Savior, and to find themselves. In this way, too, the church is reaching out a strong and loving hand to "wrestlers with life's troubled sea."

### Homes for the Aged

Another facet of life that is often touched by the church is the matter of dealing with the aged. In the first half of the twentieth century medical science has provided means for healing and health that have added an additional 25 years to the life expectancy of

all of us. This is a blessing that we all eagerly grasp. But at the same time, it poses a new problem for the church. It means that we have far more aged members than we had a decade ago.

Many of these aged find a congenial home among their children where they can walk the last mile of the road in the midst of the family circle. But, in a large number of cases, this is no longer possible. Various factors contribute towards this situation. To find a suitable place for these aged members, ten homes for the aged have been built in various parts of the land. In these homes, both men and women find a congenial Christian environment. Here they are shielded and protected, and they receive food and shelter suitable to people of riper years. We may not look upon these Homes for the Aged as institutions where these members are con-

*Occupational therapy enables the men to engage in healthful, constructive activities, helping many on the road to recovery.*





*Teaching youngsters to eat requires much patience, but perseverance brings results.*

veniently tucked away from the busy road of life. They are rather to be considered as an expression of the concern that the church has for her members, even beyond the three score and ten years.

### **New Fields of Work**

Yes, much has been accomplished and many sacrifices have been made to reach the point at which we have arrived in this centennial year. But Christ's command to his people to "be merciful" is a large and a challenging one. It is a field in which we have made remarkable strides, but we have not finished our work. The changing situations of today beckon us on to fields which we have not yet touched, and tomorrow may call us to new tasks which we have not seen today. We have no right to be complacent.

We would mention just a few of these areas of life which we have not yet occupied.



*To become a useful citizen of the community and the Church, a crippled child at Elim needs careful education and training.*



*The field secretary of the Korean Christian Relief Committee fits a Korean orphan with a sweater received from organizations in Western Michigan.*

*Patients wait their turn outside the consultation room in Korean dispensary.*



*The work of Christian mercy among Koreans is also characterized by medical care.*

Practically nothing has been done in the realm of delinquency. When a young man or young girl steps off the beaten path and commits a crime, we have been forced to give them over to the State either for punitive or corrective treatment. Some of these young people come from the reformatories far worse than when they entered. Spiritually they are dulled and they have learned new skills in a life of sin. If we could provide suitable institutions for them along the lines of many fine Catholic institutions, we might be able to save many of them. At least, we would be doing our best for them.

There is also much work that remains to be done in the social realm. Alcoholism makes its inroads upon the church today. There are many broken homes also in our circles. There are people among us who are unable to manage their own affairs in life adequately and need assistance and help. In these avenues of life, the church may not just "pass by on the other side."

In spite of the fine work done by our hospitals and agencies, we still have a long way to go in the matter of a preventive program of mental health. If we could be alerted to the problems and situations in the lives of people before they come to the breaking point, many mental and emotional break-

downs could be prevented. With all the modern methods that are available to us, many illnesses, if detected at the onset, could be cured and much heartache and expense could be prevented.

Naturally, this requires that the church must learn to know her members. Here lies one of the dangers of large churches. It is virtually impossible for the pastor and the office-bearers of such congregations to tend to the entire flock. The result often is that ministers specialize in preaching and office-bearers lose themselves in organization. The chief concern of the church should be reflected in an active pastoral ministry dedicated to the care of souls.

Our future ministers need more training in this phase of the work. Adequate care of the flock requires more than just to speak a word of consolation or admonition. There

should be a deeper understanding of the psychological forces that make men act as they do. After all, we believe and trust and worship only with those emotional and spiritual qualities that are within us. Faith is not something added to the outside, but it is part of our vital being. Would it not be well that adequate courses be given to our future pastors so that they would be equipped to accept this challenge?

Thus today we can look with deep gratitude upon that which we have received in the ministry of mercy. We may well salute the devoted men and women who worked and sacrificed and prayed to give us such fine institutions and agencies which we may use today. But as we face the future in this age of tension, we know that new challenges await us around every bend of the road.

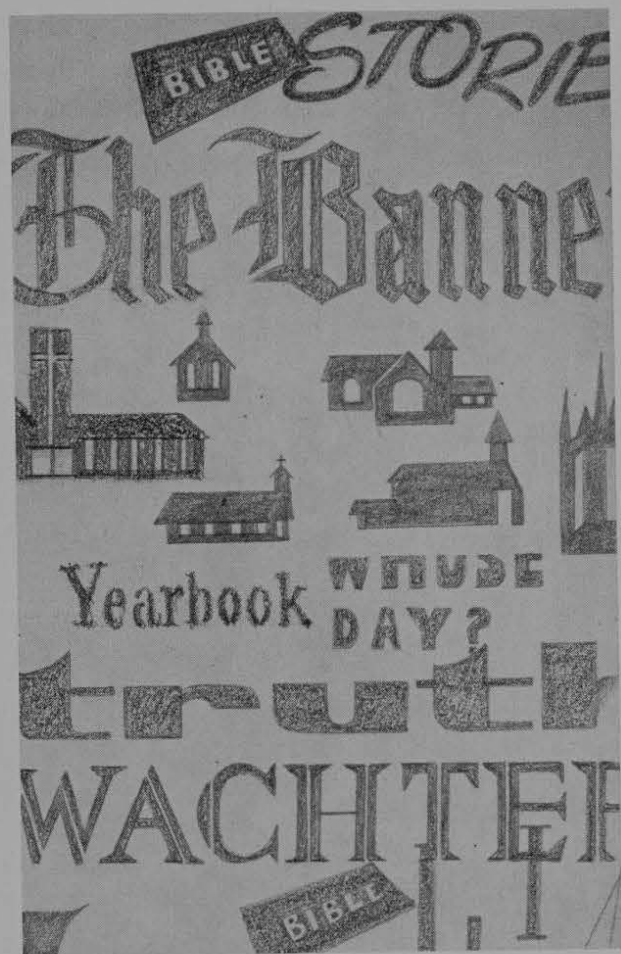
We move forward then, humbly resolving that the church of today and tomorrow shall continue to build upon the same foundation and ever bend her ear to hear the voice of the Savior when he says, "Inasmuch as ye do unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye do it unto me."

*The Sunday services at Pine Rest are sent to all the wards by means of a Sound System. Here the pastor conducts one of his Vesper Devotional Hours, a half hour period of song, Bible reading discussion, and prayer.*

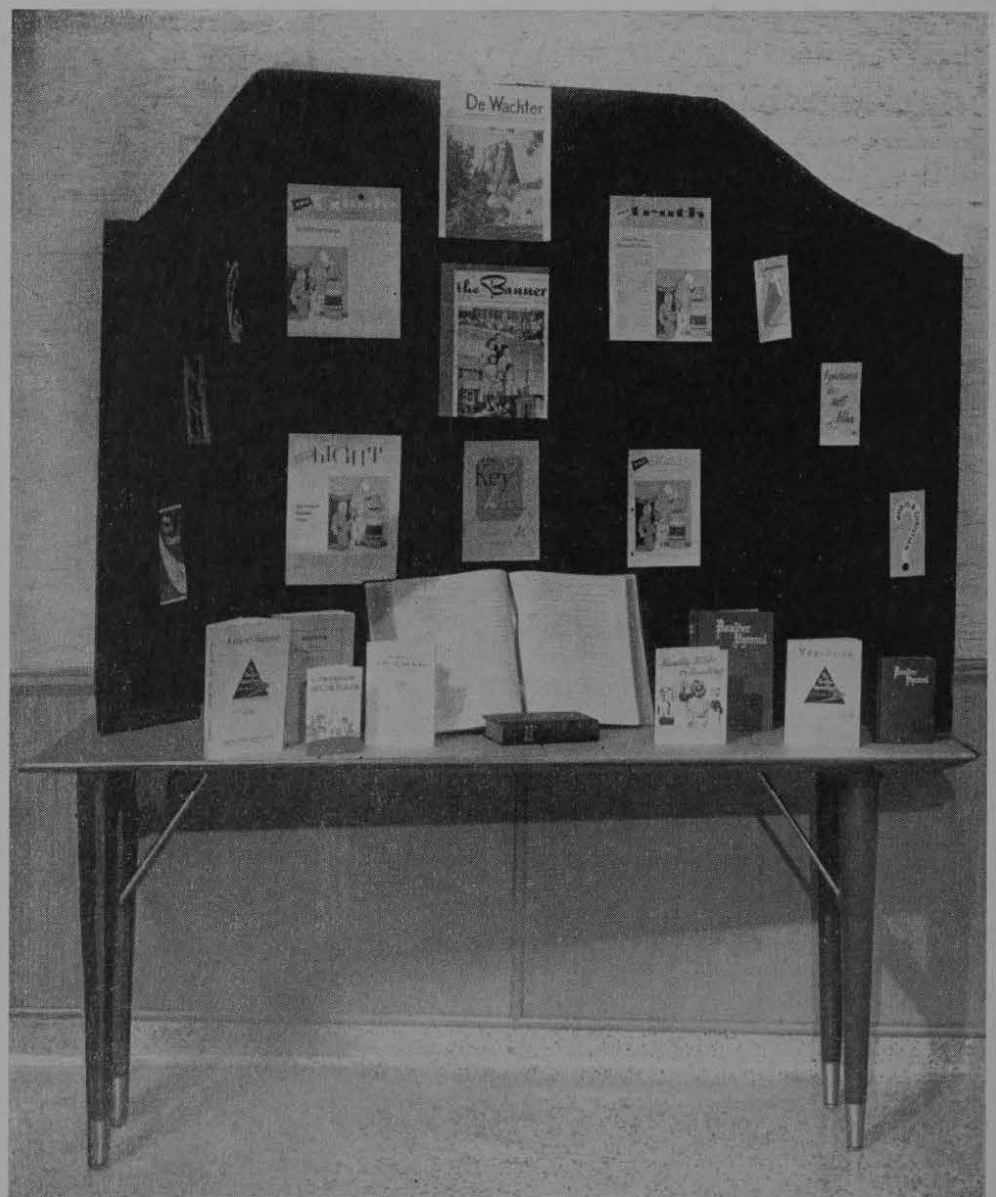




# OUR CHURCH PUBLICATIONS



*The growth of our church is also visible in the wide variety of the church's printed materials published for both young and old. These materials, designed for inspiration and information, perform an important role in the overall ministry of the church.*



## Our Church Publications

By REV. EMO VAN HALSEMA

IN HIS *Netherlanders in America*, published in 1955, Henry S. Lucas enumerates more than forty publications which appeared for a shorter or a longer time among the immigrants from the Netherlands who settled in the United States during the last hundred years. Publishing a paper proved not to be in every instance a profitable undertaking and more than one publication mentioned had to suspend operations because of financial difficulties. Some papers continued for several decades but when the use of the Dutch language among the immigrants declined the periodicals became defunct. The only place where their names still appear is the necrology column of periodicals. It is remarkable that two papers have outlived many of their contemporaries and predecessors. I am thinking of *The Banner* and *De Wachter* of the Christian Reformed Church.

When I address myself in this centennial year to the task of writing on our church publications I limit myself to *The Banner* and *De Wachter*. These two papers are owned and published by the Christian Reformed Church. In the nineties a third publication was published by the Church to meet the needs of our German-speaking constituency. This paper, *Reformierte Monatschrift*, existed but a few years. It was followed by *Der Reformierte Bode*, but this paper continued under local rather than denominational control. Today the Christian Reformed Church publishes, in addition to the two weeklies,

several Sunday School papers, the annual Yearbook, and the tracts of the synodically appointed Back to God Tract Committee, but these publications are not included in the present article. I shall limit myself to the two weeklies which have been read in our homes longer than most of us can remember.

No attempt, therefore, is made in this article to enumerate and describe the periodicals at present circulating among us. In this centennial year it would not be difficult to mention the names of a dozen publications which appear at regular intervals. These papers are published by individuals, groups, or organizations within the membership of our denomination. Interesting though a present-day review of journalism among us might be, the subject assigned to me is well defined and prescribes limitations which must be respected.

The history of our two church papers covers more than ninety years. Both periodicals were first published in the sixties, *The Banner* in 1866, *De Wachter* in 1868, and both continue to the present time. Although *The Banner* is the older publication, there is good reason to write first about *De Wachter*. *The Banner* was originally a monthly of the True Reformed Dutch Church — a Church which appeared on the ecclesiastical horizon in 1822. The name of the paper for the first forty years was *The Banner of Truth*. Not until 1914 did *The Banner* become the official weekly organ of the Christian Reformed Church in the American language. *De Wach-*

ter, however, has since its beginning been a Christian Reformed publication. Not in the sense that it was owned by the Church from its very start but in the sense that it was edited by and circulated among the members of the Christian Reformed denomination.

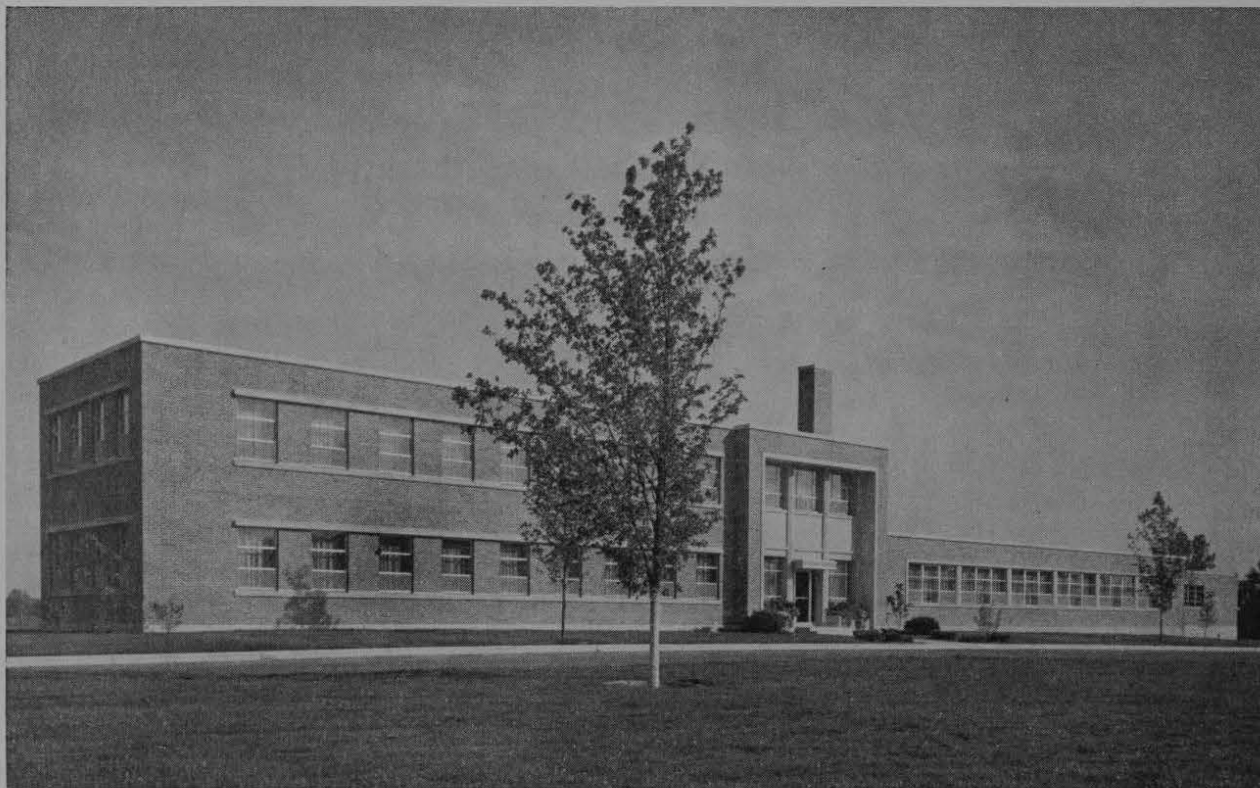
### De Wachter

The Christian Reformed Church was organized in 1857. At that time the churches were few in number and not much thought could at first be given to a publication. Gradually the need was felt for a paper which could serve as a voice of the few struggling churches. As far as we know, this matter was discussed for the first time at the General Assembly in 1866, a meeting at which all the consistories of the congregations were represented. The following year it was decided to make an attempt at publishing a paper. The details were left to Mr. C. Vorst of Holland and Rev. Douwe J. Vander Werp of Graafschap, who was to serve as editor. When the latter did not see his way clear to assume an editorial task in addition to his numerous other duties, the publishers Slag

en Benjaminse of Holland, Michigan, published on August 23, 1867, what they called "Stem Uit Het Westen" ("Voice From The West") a paper of four pages, 10 by 15 inches. The publishers announced that they intended to publish a paper in the interest of the truth as formulated at the Synod of Dort in 1618-1619. It was supposed to be a paper for the families of the young denomination. Though polemics would be avoided as much as possible, the paper would not hesitate to defend the Christian Reformed Church when attacked. This first voice of a small group that had been voiceless in an unfriendly world was also the last. Only one issue of the "Voice" appeared.

However, the trial balloon did not end in complete failure. Almost six months later,

*The church's publishing facilities are housed in this new denominational building, located on the south side of Grand Rapids. This building also serves as the headquarters for the denomination's Home and Foreign Missions Boards. The Stated Clerk of Synod also has offices here.*



on February 14, 1868, the first issue of *De Wachter* made its appearance. Its name was meant to remind the readers of watchmen on the walls of Zion and to give an answer to the oft-repeated question, "Watchman, what of the night?" Mr. C. Vorst of Holland was the publisher and Rev. D. J. Vander Werp the editor. Ever since that year, 1868, *De Wachter* has continued its journalistic mission, first as a bi-weekly, later as a weekly. In the fire of 1871, which destroyed a large part of the city of Holland, also the office of *De Wachter* was destroyed, but the frail, struggling paper continued to appear. In the first issue the need for a paper in the small, young denomination was set forth. Attention was called to enemies active in undermining the truth. The readers were warned against public and secret enemies of the Church who introduce heresies and sow seeds of discord. The Lord was asked for His blessing on this attempt to publish a paper that would serve the true interests of God's Church and promote His cause. The hope was expressed that *De Wachter* might prove itself a good Christian paper, promoting truth and godliness in the homes for which it was intended.

Gradually *De Wachter* forged ahead. The paper had a place in the hearts of the people. Sometimes it was difficult to make ends meet. The people were willing to pay the subscription price but were not always able to do so. In 1874 it was decided that the Church itself should publish the paper. The following year *De Wachter* was Church-owned and continued as such ever since. In 1880 the paper became a weekly. The number of readers in that year reached the 1200 mark. Copies were sent to the Netherlands and parts of Germany to acquaint brothers and sisters in the old world with the goings on in the new denomination in America. At first *De Wachter* followed an open policy. The editor was a busy man and contributions of ministers could be sent directly to the printer without the editor's scrutiny. Not long afterwards the editor's approval was necessary before articles of ministers could be printed. Editorial responsibility was increased. No wonder that the work of the editors in those early

days was burdensome. They were overloaded with work in their congregations or in the Theological School and could not give their full attention to the paper. Men appointed to assist them in contributing to the paper sometimes failed in sending in their contributions. In the first twenty-five years there were frequent changes at the editorial desk, five men serving in that time as editors-in-chief. In the next twenty-five years only one man served in that capacity. As the Church grew, the number of readers grew, and the paper became more firmly established.

Many interesting details can be gleaned from the recorded transactions of the General Assemblies, which in those early years were held at regular intervals, and from the early Acts of Synod. At times questions concerning the content of the paper were brought to the attention of Synod. When in 1880 the decision was taken to publish *De Wachter* weekly, the stipulation was made that there were to be fifty issues per year. The Synod of 1894 decided, however, that vacations should not interfere with publishing the paper and fifty-two issues annually were to be the minimum. In 1890 a committee for supervision of the paper was appointed — a forerunner of the present-day Publication Committee. When the semi-centennial of the Christian Reformed Church was observed in 1907, *De Wachter* entered its fortieth year. The number of readers had risen to 5600. By that time, the paper was doing well financially. Since 1880 there had been profits, at first a few hundred dollars bi-annually, later in the nineties as high as \$1350 in two years. Still later the profits ran into the thousands. In 1906 the sum of \$4000 was turned over to the treasurer of the Theological School or, as it later was called, Calvin Seminary. *De Wachter* through the years had become a benevolent influence in the denomination, in more than one way.

In the last fifty years *De Wachter* has gained in subscribers; that is, in 1957 it has more subscribers than it had in 1907. Half a century ago there were 5600 subscribers; now, fifty years later, there are 6000. The peak seems to have been reached in 1917 when the number of subscribers rose to 8600.



*Visitors to the Denominational Building are greeted by this impressive lounge. Interesting exhibits, illustrating some work carried on by the church, are contained in this visitor's lounge.*

That the subscription list in our centennial year is as high as it is, has surprised many. The period of 1907-1957 was a period of change in our denomination. In the first world war our young men went overseas to European lands. Up to that time the Holland language had been used almost exclusively in our congregations, but gradually the mother tongue gave way to the language of the land. Most of the churches became bilingual and gradually the use of the mother tongue receded.

In the second world war young men of the churches once again were called to serve in the armed forces and saw service in foreign lands all over the globe. Many who had led sheltered lives saw the realities of life far from their church and home. Bars of language and tradition were broken. When our servicemen returned, conditions had changed. Things would never be the same again. Foreign language newspapers and periodicals ceased publication. No wonder that many thought that *De Wachter* would never survive the trend. True, the number of subscribers decreased but not at such an alarming rate that operations had to be suspended.

At least, the Christian Reformed Church thus far has deemed it necessary to continue publishing the paper even though the income of late did not cover the expenditures involved. In 1917 there were 8600 subscribers, in 1930 there were still 7600. In 1950 the number had dropped to 5000 but in 1957 there were 6000 subscribers, the increase being due to the coming of many immigrants to Canada.

In the last fifty years as well as in the first forty years of its existence *De Wachter* reflected the life of the churches. Its pages furnish much information for the research historian. Immigrants kept coming to our shores and enriched our churches with the fruits of a revived Calvinism in the Netherlands. Controversies were not lacking. Some of them were of Netherlands origin, others were of a more American type. In the early years of the present century there was the controversy pertaining to supralapsarianism

and infralapsarianism. About the year 1918 there was much discussion about the implications of the premillenarian view of the coming of Christ. Then followed the controversy pertaining to the doctrine of common grace. For forty years widely varying views were expressed on the subject of divorce and remarriage. In all these controversies *De Wachter* did its part to keep our people informed and to help mold the thought of the churches.

During more than half of the last fifty years *De Wachter* was edited by Rev. Henry Keegstra, who served as editor-in-chief from 1922-1948. His calm, wise leadership is held in grateful remembrance. Another editor-in-chief who served almost a quarter of a century was Rev. Andries Keizer. Tall, stalwart, respected, he exercised a wholesome influence in days of growth and quiet development. Then there was the first editor, the man who performed yeoman's service in the early days of our denomination, the pioneer, Rev. Douwe J. Vander Werp, who served from 1868-1875. He was followed by Rev. Geert E. Boer who, as the first professor of our Theological School, had to find time to do justice to his editorial duties. He served *De Wachter* from 1875-1878. Rev. Gerrit K. Hemkes, who meanwhile was appointed to a professorship, served from 1878-1884. Then followed Rev. Lammert J. Hulst, from 1884-1888, the man who served the Church of Jesus Christ as a minister for sixty-three years. Desiring a professor as editor, the Church appointed Prof. Geert E. Boer for a second time. He served from 1888-1894. In 1894 Rev. Andries Keizer assumed his editorial duties and continued till 1918. Prof. Barend K. Kuiper followed him and served from 1918-1922. As stated above, Rev. Henry Keegstra headed the paper from 1922-1948. Rev. Emo Van Halsema succeeded him and is the present editor.

In this centennial year we gratefully remember that *De Wachter* has served the churches for ninety years. In the pioneer days of the Christian Reformed Church the right to its independent denominational existence was repeatedly impugned both here in America and in the land of the fathers.

*De Wachter* defended the Church against attacks and tried to provide the membership with edifying reading. From the beginning it tried to arouse in the membership an intelligent interest in the Church. In the controversies reflected on its pages the editors usually did not consider it to be their task to find a solution to dogmatic and other difficulties. These matters were left for other journals and ecclesiastical gatherings to solve. *De Wachter* tried to be a light upon a hill in the darkness of the time, pointing its readers to the light that never fails.

### The Banner

Although the Dutch language was used almost exclusively in the Christian Reformed Church prior to 1900, gradually the demand for more English services grew. The Lagrave Avenue Church was organized in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1887, as an English speaking congregation. The Broadway church in the same city was organized in 1893 and also used the English language in its services. In 1887 Rev. J. Y. De Baun, the first editor of *The Banner Of Truth*, moved to Grand Rapids, Michigan, and assumed the pastorate of the Lagrave Avenue Church. Meanwhile the movement for more English in the Christian Reformed Church grew. A group of far-sighted men considered buying *The Banner Of Truth*, which paper was not in a flourishing condition at that time. The Banner of Truth Publishing Company was organized in 1903, with Rev. Jacob Noordevier as its President. The new company appointed Dr. Henry Beets as editor-in-chief and the Revs. Menno J. Bosma, Herman M. Vander Ploeg, Henry Vander Werp, J. A. Westervelt and Prof. Jacob G. Vanden Bosch as co-editors. This was a very important step, not only for the paper but also for the Christian Reformed Church. The paper had a new lease on life. At first 16 pages, it soon numbered 24 pages. In 1906 there were 1700 subscribers. In the same year the name of the periodical was abbreviated to *The Banner*. Dr. Henry Beets continued as editor till 1928. In that year he felt that he should be released from his editorial duties since the expanding task as Director of Missions of the

Christian Reformed Church demanded all his attention. In 1930 the number of subscribers had risen to 14,000. In 1957, the centennial year, the figure stood at almost 40,000. According to the Yearbook of 1956 there are 46,355 families in the Christian Reformed Church. While some consider that the saturation point has almost been reached, efforts are continued to get *The Banner* into every Christian Reformed home.

In 1914 the Christian Reformed Church decided to take over the publication of *The Banner*. The following considerations led her to this step. It was felt that having an American weekly of its own would help placing the American speaking churches on a footing of equality with other churches. Then, it was felt that the Church should be in a position to control the contents of *The Banner*, since this paper would represent the Christian Reformed Church before the American world and was gradually gaining in influence. Again, it was not considered desirable that the Church should be represented by a paper owned and edited by private individuals. Since 1914 the Christian Reformed Church has published its two weeklies regularly and without interruption.

As stated above, *The Banner* is not Christian Reformed as far as its origin is concerned. Yet that origin is akin to that of other Reformed papers. Unlike *De Wachter*, its story began when the churches it tried to serve were more than forty years old. The people to whom it ministered were not recent immigrants, but people who had been in this country for many decades and who had become Americanized in language and thought. In response to a need felt in the True Reformed Dutch Church for a paper to serve its membership, *The Banner Of Truth* appeared on July 1, 1866. Its name was suggested by the fourth verse of Psalm 60, "Thou hast given a banner to those that fear thee, to be displayed because of the truth." In the first issue the editor, Rev. John Y. DeBaun, addressed himself "to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours." The editor explained, "We

propose in the fear of God, and with humble dependence upon the divine blessing, to commence the publication of a religious periodical monthly, to be called *The Banner Of Truth*, designed to establish, confirm, and build up the heritage of the Lord in the most precious fundamental truths of the gospel, to show what fruit these truths bear in those who receive them in love, and what a true Godly experience is, as distinguished from the merely common operations of the Spirit in many who have a name to live and are dead."

In that first issue in 1866, *The Banner Of Truth* warned against enemies undermining the truth. It detected specious errors in doctrine and practice. Referring to Isaiah 59:19, it proposed to raise a standard against the flood of errors that threatened the Church of that day. With the Forms of Unity as confessional standards, the paper hoped to follow men like Owen, Toplady, and Brakel as guides. The editor wanted "to alarm the careless, warn the unruly, exhort the feeble and hold up the light of truth, to direct enquiring ones to 'the Lamb of God whose blood alone cleanseth from all sin. . .'" He wanted to leave the youth a legacy of truth "as an antidote to the poisonous errors insidiously advanced and industriously propagated by Satan and worldly men, to prejudice their minds against 'the good old way,' to catch their souls in a net, and accomplish their ruin — as well as to furnish them with something to read in place of the light, vain, and fictitious literature, so common in our day." The new paper did not want to undervalue the living ministry, but it was convinced that the need for a periodical was great, especially in the many vacant churches.

The first issue of *The Banner Of Truth* contained, besides what we mentioned, a sermon, a translation from Brakel, news from the churches, an article on quenching the Spirit, and other articles on experiential religion. From a poem in the first issue we quote:

This Banner on the wall now set  
Vouchsafe to own, Thou God of Grace;  
Use it how'er it pleases Thee,  
To bless thy chosen family.



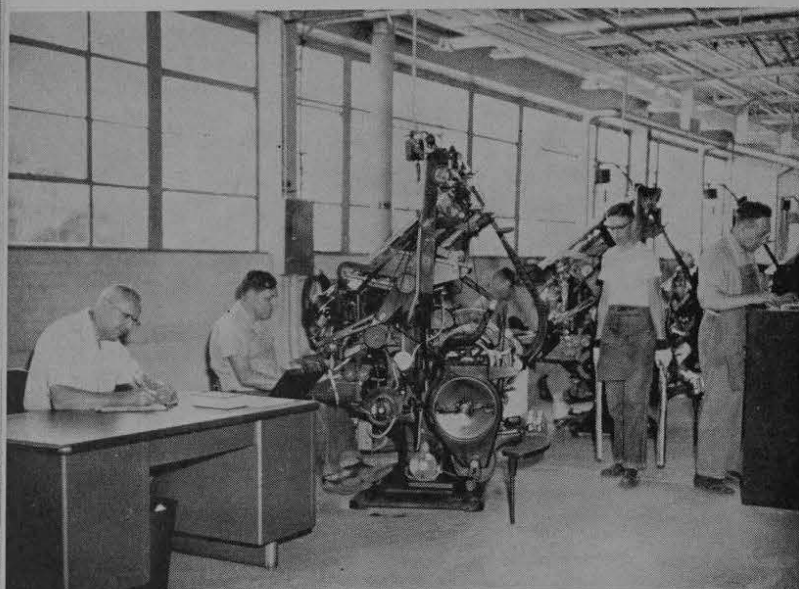
*The staff of people who work in the business office of the denominational building are forever busy making sure that The Banner, De Wachter, The Sunday School papers, etc. reach the readers as promptly and efficiently as possible.*

Though almost fifty years were to elapse before *The Banner* would be a paper owned and controlled by the Christian Reformed Church, there is nothing in its stated origin to which we could not have subscribed.

It may be of interest to insert here that before the Christian Reformed Church was fifteen years old it had already established contact with the True Reformed Dutch Church. Three representatives of the Classis of Hackensack of that Church, Rev. John Berdan, Rev. John R. Cooper and Rev. J. Y. Baun, were present at the General Assembly of Christian Reformed Congregations held in Chicago on June 7 and 8, 1871. In a signed statement incorporated in the minutes these representatives and the officers of said assembly gave expression to their unity in doctrine, discipline, worship, and, in a sense, to their church unity. It was their express desire that

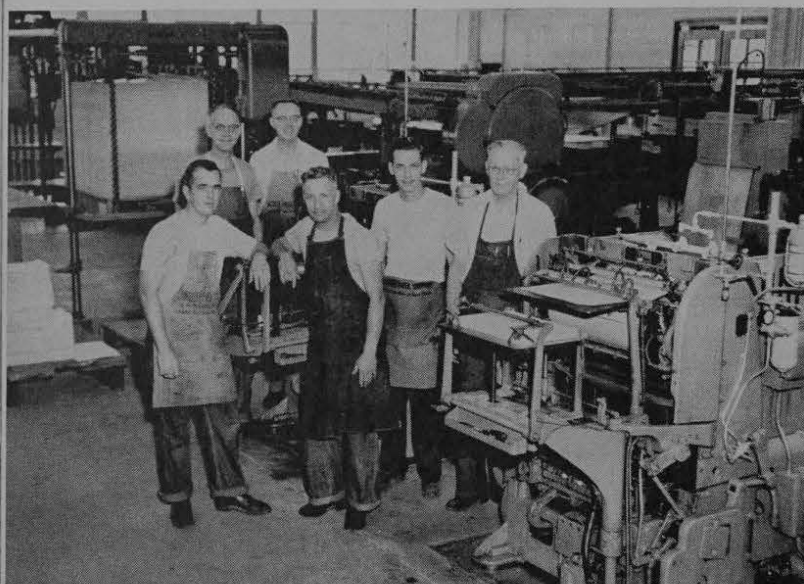
this unity should be promoted by the annual sending of representatives to each others' ecclesiastical gatherings and that an advisory vote should be accorded them. From this it appears that our fathers at an early date in our history were acquainted with the True Reformed Dutch Church and its paper *The Banner Of Truth*. When in 1903 a group of men were looking for a suitable organ to convey the message of Reformed Truth in the English language to the homes of the Christian Reformed Church, *The Banner Of Truth* was considered to be that paper. Today *The Banner* has become a household word in Christian Reformed circles.

Prior to 1903 several editors had piloted *The Banner Of Truth*, among whom Rev. John Y. DeBaun was the leading spirit. More than twenty years he devoted to this paper the best of his talents. When in 1887 he moved to Grand Rapids, Michigan, other men succeeded him as editor. In the nineties the paper was not in a flourishing condition until, in 1903, it was taken over by a new company. When Dr. Henry Beets, in 1928, had com-



*After the articles, editorials, and other pieces of copy have been written, this typewritten material is sent to the composing department where it is set up on type.*

*After all the type has been set, engravings made, and pages are locked, they go to the press room where various-sized presses grind out the finished copies of our church publications.*



pleted twenty-five years as editor of *The Banner* and declined to continue in that capacity, he was succeeded by Rev. Henry J. Kuiper, who served *The Banner* for twenty-seven years, till 1956. Rev. John Vander

Ploeg succeeded him. From 1903-1956, more than half a century, only two men, Dr. Henry Beets and Rev. Henry J. Kuiper, guided *The Banner* through fair weather and foul. Both men have done much for the Christian Reformed Church. God has used them for the good of the denomination. Varied and great were the problems they had to face. The Church was emerging from the immigrant stage and had to be integrated in its new American and Canadian environment. Thinking of the language alone, this was a tremendous undertaking. The soul of a people finds expression in its language and changing the language must of necessity affect a thriving soul. In the last fifty years the Bible had to be read, the psalms had to be sung, hymns had to be learned in a language which, in the case of many, touched but the periphery of the soul. Our people had to become conversant with the new world in which they lived; they had to become familiar with the good found in their new land and aware of the dangers that threatened them and their Church. From week to week both men labored day and night to set themselves to the task assigned to them in *The Banner*, which through the years gained in importance as a medium of contact and communication.

Much as Dr. H. Beets and Rev. H. J. Kuiper had in common, in days of peace and days of war, in days of prosperity and days of want, in days of calm development and days of struggle, the two men also differed.

It was Dr. Beets who put the Christian Reformed Church on the ecclesiastical map. Ecumenically minded, he traveled much in and outside America, and established contact with many church leaders and other outstanding men. Whenever he could, he informed the people, also through the pages of *The Banner*, about the life in other churches, especially our sister churches throughout the world. Lover of missions, he did much to awaken the mission spirit in the churches. His many books were a great help to learn more about our heritage, about the Christian Reformed Church in particular, and about our missionary task. His editorials reflected the subjects which especially had the love of his heart.



The large printed sheets are then sent to the binding department where the pages are trimmed, folded and bound into final form.



The final step in the publishing process is the sorting, addressing and mailing. Modern equipment guarantees prompt delivery of all periodicals and other publications.

Rev. Henry J. Kuiper laid stress on the distinctiveness of the Christian Reformed Church. For more than a quarter of a century he emphasized the Reformed character of our denomination. He saw dangers threatening from within and without and through the years wearied not in warning against them. His articles were usually of the solid and thought-provoking kind. *The Banner* under his leadership exercised a strong influence in the Church and, we believe, a wholesome influence. Many improvements were made in the external appearance of *The Banner* under Kuiper. It occupies its place among the religious journals of the land today with honor and distinction.

Much as both editors just mentioned and those who preceded them have, under God, been able to do through *The Banner*, they, as well as the editors of *De Wachter*, could never have made their paper what it was and is today without the whole-souled and able assistance of their co-editors and co-workers in office and shop. To mention the names of all of them would go beyond the scope of this article. Let me mention just one name, that of Mr. Jacob J. Buiten, who in August, 1956, completed almost forty years of unin-

terrupted service for our church publications as an able administrator and manager. Mr. Buiten saw our papers grow. The small office space, in 1917, had to give way to roomier quarters at 52 Market Street. In 1937 a larger building was erected at 47 Jefferson Avenue, S.E. Nineteen years later, in 1956, the modern Denominational Building and Publishing House at 2850 Kalamazoo Avenue, S.E., was completed and occupied.

What has God wrought!

At the time of our Centennial it is important to reflect on the influence of our church publications. It is difficult to say what the condition of the Christian Reformed Church would have been without them. The late Calvin College professor, Dr. Henry Zylstra, wrote in 1945 that some one should rise up to tell in artistic fashion of the influence of a church paper upon the denomination it tries to serve. He began by telling how his father in the parental Dakota home would read the church papers with the utmost care, making every part of what was written his own. Reading and rereading them, he would live along with the denomination in all its experiences. He went on to say that his paternal and maternal grandparents also were avid

readers of the church publications and of books. It was Zylstra's opinion that such reading on the part of church members makes a church virile and strong. I believe Zylstra was right. In this centennial year let us be thankful for the thousands in the States and Canada who are looking from week to week for the arrival of *The Banner* and *De Wachter* as for welcome friends. True, there are many, too many who neglect the reading of our church publications in these days of much leisure and little inclination to read; but in this centennial year we may be thankful that ever since 1868 our fathers have seen the necessity of a church paper. The ministry of the Word in the pulpit they highly valued, but at the same time they promoted a vigilant, conservative, and loyal church press.

For almost ninety years the church press

has been with us, *De Wachter* from 1868, *The Banner* from 1903 (1914). In days of sunshine these papers have promoted quiet development, in days of storm they have stood by with counsel and direction. In days of financial distress they managed to keep afloat, in more prosperous times they contributed thousands of dollars to the support of Calvin College and Seminary. The papers have inspired, guided, molded, corrected, and pointed the way. They have exhorted to be steadfast, unmovable, and always to abound in the work of the Lord. In this centennial year let us thank God for our church publications. We thank God for the men and women who have labored for their weekly publication and their continued improvement. May he guide all those who have to carry on the torch in the years ahead.

# THE CENTENNIAL IN REVIEW



The President of the United States honored our church  
by sending his greetings  
in a telegram of congratulations.

**WESTERN UNION**  
**TELEGRAM**

**CLASS OF SERVICE**  
This is a fast message unless its deferred character is indicated by the proper symbol.

**SYMBOLS**  
DL = Day Letter  
NL = Night Letter  
LT = International Letter Telegram

1201

The filing time shown in the date line on domestic telegrams is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination.

DEC330 RB304 (53) 5 525PME=

R WA647 LONG GOVT PD=THE WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON DC

REV JOHN KROMMINGA,  
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH=  
CENTENNIAL CARE CALVIN SEMINARY GRAND RAPIDS  
MICH=

TO THE MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED  
CHURCH JOINED IN THE CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF THEIR  
ESTABLISHMENT IN AMERICA, I SEND GREETINGS.

IN YOUR EMPHASIS ON THE DAILY WORK OF  
FAITHFUL CITIZENS, YOU HAVE BEEN A STRONG INFLUENCE  
FOR GOOD IN THE COMMUNITY LIFE ABOUT YOU. AS YOU  
ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION IN CIVIC AFFAIRS, YOU BRING  
THE TEACHINGS OF YOUR CHURCH INTO CONTACT WITH LIFE  
EVERYWHERE AND PROMOTE THE HIGHEST LOYALTY TO GOD  
AND NEIGHBORS.

CONGRATULATIONS AND BEST WISHES AS YOU  
ENTER YOUR SECOND CENTURY OF DEVOTED SERVICE IN  
THIS COUNTRY=

DWIGHT D EISENHOWER=

## The Centennial In Review

By CASEY WONDERGEM, JR.

THE Centennial Celebration of the Christian Reformed Church, of which this Book is a part, was in effect planned by a small group of men who worked as a committee over an extensive 48 month period.

The Synod of 1953 adopted the following recommendation:

"Your committee advises that Synod appoint a representative committee whose duty it will be to present to Synod of 1954 a set of plans for a church-wide observance of this Centennial milestone—incorporating such programs, celebrations, publications, and memorials as may be suitable and significant."

This was the mandate which was given to the four men who were appointed to the Centennial Committee. The first meeting of this committee was held in November of 1953. During the ensuing months the number of people working on Centennial plans grew from four to nearly fourteen hundred. It is estimated that more than four hundred committees grew out of this original committee appointed by Synod.

It was with careful planning that the committee set itself to the mandate which it received from Synod. The committee felt that this milestone should not only be an occasion for gratitude and humble penitence, but also an opportunity for us as a denomination to make every effort to let our light shine more brightly in a world of spiritual darkness and confusion.

The committee felt that, "the significance

of such a celebration lay in the conviction that the story of the Christian Reformed Church needed telling in this Centennial year. It must be told everywhere throughout the church. It must be told accurately and it must be told well."

"The need for telling this story arises especially out of the wealth of God's grace which has been shown to the Christian Reformed Church throughout the hundred years of her history. Only an ungrateful people will neglect to tell such a story."

"Another reason for telling the story is the general lack of acquaintance with background, the position, the institutions and programs of our church. This lack of acquaintance is found not only among outside observers of the church. Sad to say, some of them know more about us than we do ourselves. If we do not know our own heritage, we are literally asking to have it taken from us."

It was also felt that the story should be told for reasons of unity. "The Christian Reformed Church is one, but it is also many. It is East and West, United States and Canada, immigrant and convert and oldtimer. The variety is as plain as day. But we will not know unity unless we study it and talk of it with one another."

The committee also recognized that a Centennial must also chart a course. "No event, no committee, in fact, no human can do this completely. But we can let the story of the past speak of the future tasks; we can let the mistakes and failings of the past goad us to



*Nearly 12,000 people filled the International Amphitheater in Chicago to mark this as the largest Centennial Rally of the year and the largest gathering of our people in the history of the Christian Reformed Church.*

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The Grand Rapids Civic Auditorium was also the scene of a large Centennial Rally. Rallies of this sort were held throughout the denomination during the month of March.

better things in the future. And among other things, the past tells us that the story of our faith must be told in the land where God has placed us! In gratitude and obedience to God . . . in love of the neighbor . . . in self-preservation for ourselves we must witness to the world!"

### The Challenge

The committee was faced with the challenge of providing tools and materials which would enable all our churches to commemorate this anniversary properly and profitably. The materials to be offered to the churches were appropriately broken down into two distinct categories: Promotion Materials which were directed toward the communities in which we live, and Program Materials which were beamed toward our own membership to give them a better understanding and appreciation of their heritage. It was planned to tell this story during an intensive 13-week promotional period.

### Promotional Materials

The 13-week Centennial observance period saw the heart of our Reformed heritage put into print. Each week several million newspaper readers were exposed to that heritage which God has permitted us to cherish for 100



*This booth is typical of the more than thirty such booths which were set up to form the Centennial Exhibit in the Calvin Library.*

*As part of the Synodical Observance of our church's Centennial a large and colorful exhibit was set up in the Calvin Library. Booths were decorated and set up depict-*



years. Never before in its history had our denomination made such an extensive attempt to proclaim the gospel message through the available media of communications.

The advertisements appeared in newspapers of all sizes throughout the United States and Canada. The messages were sponsored in small rural weeklies as well as giant metropolitan dailies. They appeared in the *Pella Chronicle* as well as the *Grand Rapids Press*, in the *Paterson News* and the *Albuquerque Times*, in the *Kalamazoo Gazette* and the *Denver Post*. These are mere examples since this list is too extensive for inclusion at this point.

The response to the newspaper advertisements was very encouraging. People who had never before heard about our church wrote-in requesting a copy of the booklet, *This Is Our Story*. These requests came not only from people in communities where we have no churches, but many of the letters came from people living in Grand Rapids and vicinity who had never before heard about the Christian Reformed Church.

In preparing the copy for these ads our copywriters were constantly guarding against the danger of appearing boastful or presumptuous. Each of the ads merely repeated the message which was written centuries ago in the Book of Life. Any reference to our church or its anniversary was subjugated to a secondary position in the layout. The ads also drew many favorable comments from other denominations and religious groups who had been contemplating such a series.

Each newspaper ad was built around a theme which tied in with the week's Centennial radio program, special bulletin cover and billboards. The weekly radio program, "The Word for this World," was heard over forty radio stations as well as on the Mutual Network. Our churches used more than 150 giant billboards in telling their church's story, and this, in spite of the fact that billboard advertising came as a relatively new medium to our people. More than 83 percent of our churches used the special 13-week series of bulletin covers which resulted in a printing of over one million covers.

An intensive publicity program was inaugurated throughout the denomination during its Centennial year. News releases and story-ideas were available to all churches as well as complete instructions as to how to place a story in a local newspaper. The scrapbooks in

*ing the work and functions of the various denominational agencies. This was the first time in the church's history that such an exhibit was ever promoted.*



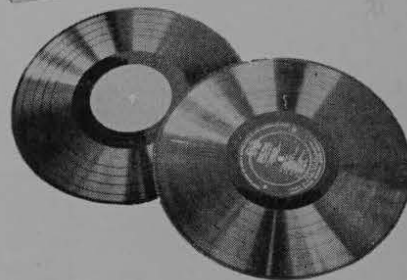


Mrs. Tulie James, one of our Indian converts at Rehoboth, contributed an Indian Rug to the Centennial celebration. She wove the pattern of the Centennial seal into this rug using the original colors of the seal.

the Centennial office bear ample evidence that our churches received unprecedented news coverage at the local level during the Centennial celebration. Areas which obtained outstanding coverage were Muskegon and Grand Haven, Michigan; Lynden, Washington; Sheboygan and Baldwin, Wisconsin; Owen Sound, Ontario, and Calgary and Edmonton, Alberta.

A measure of success was also achieved in publicity at the national level. Our church was featured on two radio network programs, NBC's "Faith in Action," and CBS's "Church of the Air." Feature articles also appeared in the *Christian Science Monitor*, *Christianity Today* and *Christian Century* magazines, as well as other religious periodicals.

This was your church on its Centennial occasion sharing its heritage with its fellow-men; attempting to influence its environment; and heralding the message of its King to thousands and millions of listeners and readers. Our hope



A variety of promotional materials was produced for our Centennial observance. Some of these media had never before been used by our church.

and prayer is that this may have been but a small beginning and that our church will continue to use these modern communications media far beyond its Centennial year.

Other promotional materials which were developed to assist the churches in telling the Centennial story were: (1) a 32-page booklet attractively illustrated, describing the history, doctrines and institutions of our church (more than one hundred fifty thousand of these booklets were distributed); (2) radio spot announcements which were made available to all the churches for use on their local stations; and (3) attractively colored church signs (more than 70% of our churches placed one or more of these identifying signs on their church grounds).

### Program Materials

A variety of interesting program materials were prepared and made available to the churches to enable all our congregations to equally share in the Centennial celebration plans. They were designed primarily for our own people to give them a better understanding and appreciation of their roots and back-



The church of Munster, Indiana, entered this prize-winning float in a community parade. This float utilized the Centennial motif and included a model of their church building.



A section of the Centennial Pageant was devoted to the foreign mission fields of our church. The costumes used throughout were all authentic. These Japanese costumes were purchased in one of the Tokyo shops by some of our missionaries in Japan.

ground. It was felt that we were not in a position to go out and tell others about our church if we ourselves were not thoroughly familiar with its background, institutions, position and program. These programs were designed to be educational as well as entertaining.

### Sight-Sounds

For the first time in its one hundred years of existence the Christian Reformed Church pioneered in the audio-visual field. In order that our people might be better informed as to our church's history, functions, etc., the Centennial committee produced a series of colored slides and recordings which were sold to the churches. Eleven such programs were produced varying in length from a half hour to forty-five minutes. These dramatic and inspirational presentations were very well received. The fact that these programs received such a warm welcome in most of our churches indicates that our people appreciated the efforts being made to bring the activities of the denomination closer to them through audio-

visual techniques. As someone recently remarked, "Why do our churches always have to go to other denominations and religious groups to obtain audio-visual materials? Our church has been in existence for 100 years, why can't we dip into our own resources and produce some of our own after-recess material?" The Centennial committee hopes that it has made a beginning and that the various agencies of our church will continue to develop new audio-visual materials for the inspiration and edification of our people.

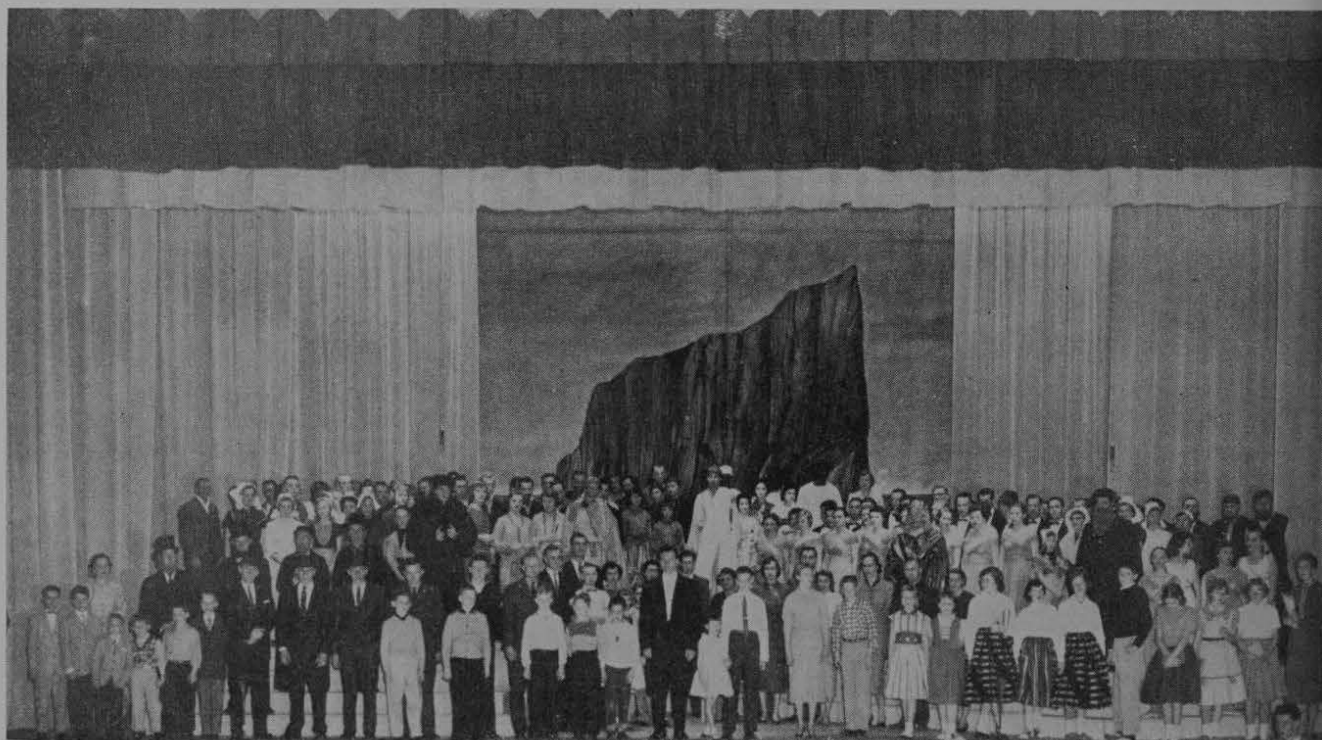
### Pageant

One of the highlights of the Centennial celebration was the production and performance of the Centennial Pageant, "Upon This Rock . . ." In all the areas where the pageant was performed it was hailed as a great success by both the audience as well as the newspaper critics in the particular locale. The initial performance of the pageant was held at the Grand Rapids Civic Auditorium where more than 10,000 people witnessed the opening performances. The production was subsequently staged in Sioux City, Pella, Ostfriesland, Chicago, Sheboygan, Kalamazoo, Holland, Roch-

ester, and Paterson. Other churches also produced the pageant, but on a smaller scale.

The pageant itself was written by Miss Betty Duimstra in a poetic-prose style. It was divided into a prologue and four main parts. The first phase presented the doctrinal heritage of the church as shown in the early history of the Christian Church and its leaders such as the Apostle Paul, St. Athanasius, St. Augustine, Martin Luther, and John Calvin. The second phase dealt with the historical roots of the Christian Reformed Church, both in the Netherlands and in the United States. The third phase portrayed the life within the church. This included education, publications and Christian mercy. The fourth phase portrayed the church and its evangelistic activities, including foreign and home missions, and the radio ministry of the church.

*This photo illustrates the giant sized cast which was used to produce the Centennial Pageant in Grand Rapids. More than 160 people were used in the cast, many other people were employed on the various committees.*



Contributing to the success of the performance were the strikingly beautiful costumes which were worn by the cast. Every effort was made to insure the authenticity of the costumes used in each scene. Other unique features of this dramatic performance were the unusual lighting techniques, the staging, the rapid movement, the original musical score, and the speaking choir. Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Boeve were responsible for the masterful direction of this Centennial pageant.

### **Additional Program Activity**

In addition to the sight-sound programs and the pageant there were many other program materials and activities designed to inform and inspire our members and to stimulate their interest in the Centennial celebration. A Hymn and Anthem contest as well as a photography contest were conducted on the national level. Booklets containing recently compiled facts and statistics on the history and growth of the denomination were published and distributed throughout the church. Special programs, lesson plans, and papers were developed for use in the Sunday Schools. More than 50,000 Centennial calendars were distributed throughout our churches.

### **Rallies**

Extensive plans were made to urge each denominational area to schedule a Centennial Rally during the week of March 18-25. These rallies were conceived as opportunities to tell our friends and neighbors who we are and what we believe. Approximately seventy such rallies were held throughout the United States and Canada. Each followed somewhat the same pattern: an outstanding speaker, massed choirs, special music as well as civic officials bringing the greetings of the community. Perhaps the most outstanding rally was the one sponsored by our Chicago churches in the Chicago International Amphitheater on April 15. More than 12,000 people crowded into this great hall and hundreds more were turned away to mark this as the largest single gathering of our people in one hundred years. Those who were able to attend this inspiring

rally will not soon forget this soul-stirring event.

### **Centennial Sunday**

Centennial commemoration activities perhaps reached their peak in the observance of April 7 as Centennial Sunday. This was the closest Sunday to the actual birthdate of our denomination. On this Sunday a Centennial Memorial Thank-Offering was received in all our churches. Our people were given an opportunity to present a visible expression of their gratitude to God for one hundred years of Divine blessing upon our church. The funds collected on Centennial Sunday were used to erect a Centennial Memorial Seminary. Approximately \$350,000 was received in this thank-offering and it is estimated that 95% of our churches participated in this Memorial Campaign.

### **Synodical Celebration**

The 13-week Centennial promotional period was climaxed by a special Synodical Celebration in Grand Rapids. During the sessions of the 1957 Synod, the Centennial Pageant was featured in a repeat performance at the Civic Auditorium with the delegates to Synod in attendance as official guests. A special exhibit was set up in the Calvin Library building in which all denominational agencies participated. This Centennial exhibit was open to the public. On June 19, the delegates attended the Centennial Synodical Banquet at the Calvin Commons. Three speakers were featured on the evening's program; Rev. I. Van Dellen spoke on the blessings of the past, Dr. J. H. Kromminga described the activities of the present Centennial year, and Rev. J. Vander Ploeg presented the challenge of the future.

This Synodical Celebration has also been termed an "International Celebration" because of the large number of foreign delegates from sister and corresponding churches throughout the world. No less than fifteen denominations sent representatives to the 1957 Synod representing every contingent on the globe except one. In addition to the fraternal delegates from Canada and the United States,

South Africa, the Netherlands, Australia, Japan, Ceylon, Korea, and Scotland were also represented. Congratulatory messages were also received from Ireland and Argentina to give this Synod more of an ecumenical character than any previous assembly.

Extracts from all these congratulatory messages and telegrams are included at the end of this section.

### How Did It Happen?

This chapter would not be complete if we should fail to give recognition to some of the people whose enthusiasm and diligent efforts contributed greatly toward the success of this broad promotional program. But above all, we are thankful to God for His guidance and direction and for enabling us to enjoy the full participation of all our congregations.

Recognition should be given to the mem-

*Many of the pictures used in the Centennial sight-sound programs had to be posed and shot on location. The above immigrant scene was used in the program "Unrest, Peril and Blessing".*



*Centennial tree planting at Dordt College, Sioux Center, Iowa. Similar events were held throughout the denomination.*

bers of the Executive Committee, who for forty-eight long months gave of their time and talents to develop the overall plans and set up the machinery to carry out this program. Members of this committee were: Dr. John H. Kromminga, Chairman, Mr. Fred H. Baker, Secretary, Rev. Harold Dekker, Rev. Wm. Kok, Rev. E. B. Pekelder, Dr. J. Hoogstra, Mr. H. G. Daverman, and Mr. S. T. Youngsma. The committee also wishes to pay respects to the outstanding contributions which the late Dr. Henry Zylstra made toward the Centennial program while he was a member of the above committee.

Much of the success of the Centennial organization is due to that vast corps of over 700 Regional Chairmen, District Chairmen and local church Centennial representatives. These men carried home the plans of the central committee and set them into motion at the local levels. Without the loyal and dependable liaison provided by these men, the Centennial plans could not have realized any measure of success.

Mention should be made of the extensive cooperation which the Centennial Committee received from the Back to God Hour office, *The Banner* and *De Wachter* staffs, Calvin College, the Home Missions office, Publications Committee, and other denominational agencies. Without their assistance the Centen-

nial Celebration would have been relatively impossible.

There are others, too many to mention in this article, and to all of them we express our sincere thanks for their interest, for their ambition, and for a job well done.

### What Will They Remember?

Recently one of the members of our committee posed the question, "I wonder what phase of the Centennial Celebration will be remembered most by our people?" After reflecting upon this question, it was decided that the answer would vary depending upon the area in which it was asked.

Chicago will not soon forget the giant rally at the International Amphitheatre. . . . Grand Rapids will perhaps remember the pageant, as will Sheboygan, Kalamazoo, Sioux City, Pella, Holland, Ostfriesland, and Rochester. . . . Lansing, Illinois will perhaps recall the Centennial Float in their annual Gladiola Parade. . . . Worthington, Minn., will remember among other things the store window display, as will Zillah, Washington. . . . Rehoboth, N.M., the Centennial rug woven by Mrs. James. . . . Northwest Canada the Centennial rallies, poster contests and newspaper advertising. . . . Washington, D.C. the ads they sponsored in the *Washington Post*, as will Denver, which also advertised in one of America's largest dailies, the *Denver Post*. . . . some of our Eastern churches will recall their Centennial canvassing campaigns. . . . Sioux Center the tree they planted on the campus of Dordt College, as did Terra Ceia, N.D., and Cochrane, Ont., Canada. . . . Our missionaries in Japan and Nigeria will perhaps remember the sightsounds which they were able to see and the monthly *Centennial Newsletters*, which kept them in touch with the celebration at "home."

Others will recall singing the Centennial hymn . . . or the special bulletin covers . . . the memorial brick banks . . . the long hours spent in Centennial committee meetings . . . the congratulatory message received from President Eisenhower . . . the church dinners with Centennial napkins and placemats adorning the tables . . . the impressive New Year's Eve service which opened the year's Centennial activity. And some will recall meeting their local

*Indian costumes used in the mission scenes in the Pageant were made by the Indians at Rehoboth.*





*Since there was no available pictorial record of the immigration era and early history of our church, much effort was required to attempt to recreate some of these early scenes. Most of these scenes were used in the production of the sight-sound programs.*

*Sectional meetings such as the Zeeland meeting above, were held throughout the United States and Canada to communicate ideas and discuss plans with the various chairmen at the local levels. Much of the success of the overall celebration can be attributed to these informational committee meetings.*



*Thousands of pieces of literature were mailed out of the Centennial Office during the course of the Centennial planning Period and Observance. Calvin College students were enlisted to assist in this tremendous task.*





*A member of one of our Grand Rapids churches donated a five-tier cake which was displayed at the Synodical Centennial Banquet. Admiring the baker's art are; Dr. J. H. Kromminga, Seminary President, Rev. S. J. Vandera, Walt from South Africa, Rev. N. J. Monsma, President of Synod, and Rev. C. Vande Woude, from the Netherlands. Rev. Vande Woude and Mr. Plantinga, the baker, were in a Nazi prison camp together during the German occupation.*

newspaper editors for the first time and the publicity they received as a result of this introduction. The children will no doubt remem-

ber the pins, the decals and the book, *I Will Build My Church*.

Although different events will stand out in different people's minds, certainly all will remember, and be forever grateful, for the wonderful way in which God has blessed and prospered the Christian Reformed Church during its one hundred years in the new world.

As we enter our second century in the new world, may we never lose sight of the "challenge" of "God's favor."



## Centennial Greetings from Around the World

### *Congratulatory Addresses at the Synod of 1957:*

"Esteemed Brethren: It is a great favor for me that I may be in your midst, as delegate of de Gereformeerde Kerken van Nederland, in order to bring you the greetings and congratulations of these churches at this great centennial that you are celebrating. It is an honor for the Gereformeerde Kerken van Nederland, that they may stand next to you at this feast of remembrance.

"There has been from the beginning a close contact between your church and ours. And this communion has not been weakened in the course of this century but rather it has been strengthened. Again and again in the history of the Netherlands there have been periods in which waves of emigrants left our country for America, and among them were many who joined your churches. After the last world war, thousands of members of our churches have gone to Canada to find there a new home. Their departure means a loss to our church, but we are not greatly troubled over this, because we know that they are swelling your ranks and bringing to life the Christian Reformed Church in many places in Canada and North America. We in the Netherlands think with great thankfulness of the many things you have done for our emigrants.

"With all my heart I want to express here the feelings of warm affection which we in the Netherlands feel for your churches, and which increases as we come to know you better. We rejoice with you in the rich blessings which God has given to your churches in the past century, and we are aware of the great and special task which God has planned for you in the future. May God fill you with His Holy Spirit to enable you to accomplish this great and wonderful task, for the sake of His kingdom and His name."

THE REV. C. VAN DER WOUDE,  
Pastor at Leeuwarden, and President of  
de Gereformeerde Kerken van Nederland.

"Dear Friends in Christ: It is an exceptional honour and privilege to me that I may bring over to you the most hearty congratulations to your Church from the Reformed Church in South Africa, on this mem-

orable occasion of your Centenary festival. If the Church of Christ that possesses life eternal and can therefore never grow older, but always remains the youthful and radiant bride of her Lord, can yet be measured in terms of years, then your Church and our Church are almost twin daughters of the same mother—the "Chr. afgeskeie Kerk" of the Netherlands in the 19th century.

"In 1959 we hope to celebrate our Centenary festival in South Africa and I must thank you in advance for the group of your people that I understand intend to attend our festival at that time.

"May the faithful Covenant God bless you as a Church very richly at this centenary festival, so that a great inspiration for yourselves and for the whole Church of Christ may flow from it.

"With you, we thank the Lord that maintained you for a hundred years and made you such an abundant blessing. Our prayer is that He will preserve you in the future and will enable you to cling to our Reformed heritage until the end and to carry our glorious faith and confession unto the ends of the earth throughout all the ages, until our Lord comes. May it then be said to you out of the Lord's mouth: 'Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.' (Matt. 25:21)."

DR. S. J. VANDER WALT,  
Delegate of Die Gereformeerde  
Kerk van Suid Afrika

"Esteemed Brethren in the Lord: As I stand in your midst today as a delegate of the 27 churches of Australia and New Zealand, I must say I am here with a strong feeling of the guidance and the providence of that God who is the God of my fathers and of your fathers, and who has chosen us in Christ before the foundations of the world and who draws his elect from every nation.

"Today I am here—the Lord has brought me here—to congratulate you on behalf of the 27 small but thankful churches of Australia and New Zealand. I see it as a great honor but also as a great blessing that I may be in your midst during these days and that as a delegate of our churches I may witness your faith

and your love and your cordial interest in the wonderful growth of your youngest sister church with her God-given opportunities.

"God makes history. He did so here. He does so now in Australasia. May your church remain a living church, strong in orthodoxy, strong in faith and hope and love, to fulfill its still growing missionary task."

THE REV. J. F. H. VANDER BOM,  
Fraternal Delegate from the  
Reformed Churches of Australia and  
New Zealand.

"Esteemed and dear Brethren: The last Synod of the Reformed Churches of Indonesia, held at Bandung a year ago, appointed me delegate to the sessions of your Synod. . . .

"The first duty I have to do is to express cordial thanks for the cheerful invitation to join the sessions of your Synod and to celebrate with you in the Centennial of your Church.

"And so you can see in this special delegation a sign of close connection between our Churches and also a sign of our desire to partake in your thankfulness and gladness.

"We thank our God in all our remembrance of you . . . thankful for your partnership in the gospel . . . and we are sure that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

"We are living in extreme parts of the world. But the last Sunday I spent in Bandung, we sang the words: 'In Christ there is no East nor West, nor North nor South.'

"And also, therefore, your sister churches from so far away enjoy the Centennial of your Church. They rejoice with you that God has blessed you with spiritual and material blessings above most of us."

THE REV. E. PYLMAN,  
Fraternal Delegate from the  
Reformed Churches of Indonesia

"Fathers and Brethren: It has fallen to me to bring greetings from your youngest sister the Dutch Reformed Church in Ceylon . . . You are commemorating your Centennary; I come from a Church which commemorated her tercentennary in 1942. But there is really no discrepancy in our ages. We both hail from a common stock. We both have a common origin. My fathers and your fathers have made us inheritors of a like precious faith. We both go back for our origins to Christ and his apostles.

"That was what the 16th century Reformation stood for. It did not bring into being a new Church. It was the old Church revived and reformed. The old wells that were covered over were dug once again that men and women the world over might quench their spiritual thirst at the stream that flowed from the city of our God.

" . . . I submit the official greetings from my church in Ceylon. . . ."

RICHARD VERNON METZELING,  
Fraternal Delegate from the  
Dutch Reformed Church in Ceylon.

"Fathers and Brethren: You are celebrating your centennial this year. The first thirty years of my life I lived in the Christian Reformed Church. . . . I mention these matters not to tell my story, which is not sufficiently significant, but to say that I am thus a fitting representative of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to bring to you rich greetings in your centennial year. I may not be able to express our gratitude for the benefits received from the Christian Reformed Church as well as many of my brethren, but none will feel it deeper than I do. If in one way I do feel strange in addressing your major assembly; in another way I feel as if I am home.

" . . . The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, though but recently delivered, is yet not immune to the influence of false doctrine. And the Christian Reformed Church enjoys no such immunity. We may build strong walls to keep out secularism and error, but like the ether around us, it will come through. There is no Church which can keep its priceless treasure of faith pure and undefiled without a continual militant defense of that faith. And areas of neutrality, where one can fellowship with the enemies of the cross of Christ, there are none. For this great work which Christ has committed to his church we will need scholars of great strength and devotion.

"We have a great tradition in common. Both in Scotland and in the Netherlands our Reformed Faith has flowered. . . . We must conserve that tradition and develop it. Tradition without the vitalizing, stimulating study of the Word of God will degenerate into a dead orthodoxy, but cutting ourselves loose from that tradition will be to our lasting injury."

THE REV. JOHN DE WAARD,  
Fraternal Delegate of the  
Orthodox Presbyterian Church

"Friends in the Christian Reformed Church: It is indeed a very great privilege for me, at this memorable synod of your Centennial celebration, to bring to the Christian Reformed Church the official greetings of the Reformed Presbyterian Church.

"Our church is not so well known to you, and so a word of identification might be in order. The Reformed Presbyterian church is not, as is commonly supposed, a branch or offshoot of the Presbyterian Church in U.S.A., but rather has its roots in the Reformation in Scotland in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Its establishment in America goes back about 150 years. The Reformed Presbyterian church is Reformed in doctrine and Presbyterian in form of church government. Its churches, though sparsely scattered, are widely scattered, extending from Vermont to California and from Canada to Flor-

ida. Although we are insignificant in size, we feel very much a part of a large fellowship of churches, including also the Christian Reformed Church, whose faith and testimony are true to the infallible Word of God.

"It is very encouraging to me that during the past year ecumenical conversations have been carried on between the Reformed Presbyterian Church and the Christian Reformed Church through committees appointed by both synods. And I am happy to report to you that the Reformed Presbyterian synod, at its sessions earlier this month, has reported further conversations of this kind for the coming year. I can only say that I hope this will result in a better mutual acquaintance and a closer association in the work of the Kingdom."

THE REV. JOSEPH A. HILL,  
Fraternal Delegate from the  
Reformed Presbyterian Church in  
North America

"Esteemed Brethren: I am happy to present to you the warmest greetings from the Korean Presbyterian Church on this historical occasion of the celebration of the centennial anniversary of the Christian Reformed Church.

"We thank and praise God for your Reformed faith of the historic Christianity in the loyalty to the Holy Scriptures and your living clear testimony to the Lord Jesus Christ in this age of uncertainty and compromise. Also for your remarkable accomplishment and strengthening of the Church for the past one hundred years under the marvelous blessings of our Almighty God.

"Above all, it is our privilege to have fellowship with your church as one of the correspondent churches and a mutual relationship in the Reformed faith. The Reformed testimony of your church has confirmed and strengthened our faith greatly and encouraged us in the beginning years of our church.

"And we pray that our mutual relationship and understanding between the Christian Reformed Church and the Korean Presbyterian Church may increase in the bond of the blood of Jesus Christ and in our Reformed faith and also that your works in Korea may grow and bring abundant fruit for the kingdom of God and for His glory."

THE REV. KUN SAM LEE,  
Representative of the  
Korean Presbyterian Church.

"Friends in Christ: It is a great privilege for me to be present at your Synod at the time of the Centennial Anniversary celebration of the Christian Reformed Church. As representative of the Reformed Church in Japan, I want to express our warmest congratulations on this occasion of your church's one hundredth birthday. . . .

"We glorify God for His guidance given to your

church, and we pay our respects to your church for its glorious history. Since 1952 our church has had the privilege to cooperate with your missionaries in Japan. It is our great pleasure that we can work together with mutual trust and understanding, standing on the same Reformed faith.

"Our synod expresses hearty congratulations and prays that the Christian Reformed Church may cultivate a glorious future, constantly trusting in God to glorify His holy name, and we request all of you to pray for our Reformed Church in Japan."

THE REV. MAMARU TAMAKI,  
Fraternal Delegate from the  
Reformed Church in Japan

"Brethren in Christ: I count it an honor and a privilege to have been delegated to this Centennial Synod of your churches to bring to you the official greetings of the churches I represent.

"This, brethren, calls for true ecumenicity. If ever the Church has felt the need of and the deep meaning of Jesus' prayer: 'That they may all be one', it is today. Today, more than ever, the Church which is one must be one in conviction, in spirit, in effort, in witness, in vigilance. This is especially true for those of the Calvinistic Reformed Faith with its principle of living the life of the kingdom in every sphere of life. Therefore, whatever is of sin which has brought division must be put away, brotherly and manly, in the Spirit of Christ. Whatever God has given us in the past to unite us, to give us a solid front, to give us firm footing, to give a unified witness, to give us ultimate victory together must be uncovered, rediscovered in all its wealth and power. For your churches and ours, and every Church of Reformed persuasion, it means the truth of Holy Writ as embodied by our fathers in the Three Forms of Unity. United in this truth, *we shall stand*; divided on the basis of this truth, *we shall fall*.

"On the basis of this Confession you have extended to us by your invitation to be here, the hand of fellowship. We are grateful for it. On this same basis of Confession we could not refuse your hand of fellowship.

"What lives in the heart and mind of the Churches I represent is honestly and sincerely expressed in the letter our Synod directed to your body assembled here. I need not go into this matter, you all are acquainted with it. Our prayer is, may the Lord give you wisdom, and direct you by His Spirit to make your decision on this matter to His glory and to the welfare of His Church universal.

"With it also goes our prayer that the Lord may bless your churches to make you a faithful witness in years to come of the principles of the fathers which mark this Centennial."

THE REV. A. CAMMENG, A.  
Fraternal Delegate from the  
Protestant Reformed Churches of  
North America

"Fathers and Brethren: I consider it a great privilege and a personal honor to be asked by the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America to bring fraternal greetings from our denomination to your esteemed Synod meeting here in Grand Rapids, Michigan. It is a pleasure for us to congratulate you as a denomination on the occasion of your one-hundredth anniversary. In a way, I suppose, I could bring the maternal greetings of our church for one hundred and one years ago our denominations were still one. Yet your vigor and growth have surely earned you the right of separate, fraternal existence. This sort of fraternal greeting would have been impossible one hundred years ago. How thankful we are that gradually the old animosities and the ancient bitteresses have gradually disappeared. We trust the future will hold an ever increasing strengthening of our mutual interests, concerns, and love for one another in the Church of Christ, which is His body, even in Jesus Christ our Sovereign Lord. . . .

"We need one another to strengthen the conservative witness of the Gospel. In a day of ecumenism there is a temptation to water down the Gospel to make it more acceptable to all. We need to assert the truth firmly and vigorously. We are all aware that in our day the theological climate is in more 'conservative' lines. Yet the main point of attack, even today, is the inspiration of Holy Scripture. At this point we need to stand together and assert our continued faith in the inerrancy of the Scriptures. Let us continue to seek out one another and together maintain a vigorous witness.

"It is important for us also to witness together to our Reformed faith. If we believe in the validity of our standards of faith, then we must assert these truths before all the world. We call the whole church to a similar faith. We dare to display our creedal faith before all others believing in their inherent truths. There are two schools of thought in this matter. Some counsel complete isolation and withdrawal to maintain doctrinal purity. A long time ago Dr. Bavinck said, 'Isolement is niet altijd bewijs van kracht, het kan ook een teken van bekrompenheid zijn.' We need to assert our faith in all world-wide relationships and call men everywhere to acknowledge truth as we understand it and for which we do not apologize.

"Let us seek more and more to work together cooperatively. In the fields of healing, education, publication and so on. Let our conferences and discussion groups be carried on cooperatively. Thus, together, we may strengthen the cause of the Christian church everywhere.

"In closing, I would like to leave a text of Scripture with you. 'Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown'. (Revelation 3:11)."

THE REV. JEROME DEJONG  
Fraternal Delegate from the General  
Synod of The Reformed Church in  
America

# *Congratulatory Messages Read at the Synod of 1957:*

"During the last few years the General Consistory of the Dutch Reformed Church of Ceylon has considered it a great privilege to send you greetings by letter at the time of the annual meetings of your Synod. This year, however, we are most happy that our Church will be represented at the Synod by two of our delegates, who will address you in person. We are glad that on the centennial celebrations of your Church our delegates may have the privilege of bringing our hearty greetings.

"Celebrations such as are yours are occasions for thanking our God for His gracious help and guidance of the past, as well as occasions in which we look forward with faith and confidence to what can be achieved in the future. We pray that the Christian Reformed Church may continue as a bulwark of the faith once for all delivered to the saints, and that God may honor and bless you in your service to Him. We take this opportunity also to specially thank you for the assistance we have received from you and your Church in the last decade.

"If the Lord tarries in His coming, may the Christian Reformed Church continue faithfully to press on toward the prize of the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

President of the General Consistory:  
RICHARD DERIDDER  
Scriba of the General Consistory:  
C. A. SPELDEWINDE

"Dear Brethren: Allow my wife and myself to express our heartfelt greetings on the occasion of your centenary celebrations. We thank God for the great work your church has done during the past hundred years and pray that the Holy Spirit may guide you in the whole truth. Never shall we forget the impressions the work of your church made on us during 1946.

"We hope that the visit of Dr. S. J. van der Walt will prove to you that we in South Africa still feel the ties of our common heritage and we hope to welcome delegates of your church to our celebrations D.V. in 1959.

"With sincere fraternal greetings, yours in the Lord."

DR. S. DU TOIT,  
Potchefstroom, So. Africa

"We would congratulate you most heartily on the privilege of reaching this milestone. When, in 1834, Hendrik de Cock together with the faithful at Ulrum, signed the Act of Separation, they would not have thought that the Christian Reformed Church would even have its place and give its testimony among the American public.

"This reminds us of God's dealings with the Jerusalem Church which, as a result of persecution was 'scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and

Samaria.' And these Christians who had *nolens volens*, left their home country, 'went everywhere preaching the Word' (Acts 8:1, 4)."

J. C. MARIS, Secretary.  
Deputaten der Christelijke  
Gereformeerde Kerken voor eenheid  
onder de Gereformeerde belijders  
en correspondentie met buitenlandse  
kerken.  
Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

"The Free Church of Scotland takes this opportunity to send felicitations to the Christian Reformed Church on such a memorable occasion, and pray that the Blessing of the Head of the Church may further enrich and strengthen the Christian Reformed Church in the Faith once delivered unto the Saints.

"With all good wishes."

WILLIAM MACLEOD,  
Principal Clerk of the Assembly,  
Free Church of Scotland, Edinburgh.

"We wish to commend your Synod for the steadfast witness for the Reformed Faith during 100 years. You have given a distinguished lead in Christian witness and Theological thought in the United States and we are glad to share in that work and witness by means of your many fine publications. Arminianism in various forms constitutes such a subtle threat to members of every Church that there is great need for a re-emphasis of Calvinism from pulpit to pen, and we feel that your Church is well equipped to make full use of these great opportunities.

"We congratulate you heartily on this happy occasion and pray that the blessing of the Church's King and Head may rest abundantly upon you in your centennial celebrations, in your Synodical deliberations, and in your work and witness in the years to come.

"Therefore I wish that peace may still within thy walls remain, And ever may thy palaces prosperity retain."

"On behalf of the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland."

ADAM LOUGHRIDGE, Clerk,  
Synod of the Reformed  
Presbyterian Church of Ireland,  
Glenmanus Manse,  
Portrush, Co. Antrim.

"Dear Brethren in Christ: Considering your hundred years' existence as a church, we rejoice at transmitting greetings to the assembly of your synod. On the occasion of your centennial celebration we regard it as our necessity to join in thanksgiving and commemoration with you. . . your church is closely connected with the history of our church. The name of your oldest congregation, 'Graafschap', and one of

your Classes, 'Ostfriesland', give witness to this day of the fact that a large number of emigrants helped to found your church there in America.

"You can imagine that we are closely interested in the life of your church. And because you have reached the aim of your hundred years, we praise the King of the Church because of the great deeds He has done for you."

J. GUHRT, Pastor at Emden,  
Synode Der Altreformierten Kirche  
in Niedersachsen, Germany.

"We rejoice with you that the Lord has enabled you to 'hold fast the form of sound words' for the past century, and we hope and pray that under the blessing of "the God of all grace" the Christian Reformed Church will grow and abound unto His glory. There is a great need at the present time for a fearless declaration of God's holy word. We are pleased to know that you hold to that great system of religious thought which bears Calvin's name, and which, to quote Dr. Loraine Boettner, "is nothing more nor less than the hope of the world."

"With renewed thanks and Christian greetings."

W. J. McDOWELL, Secretary,  
Irish Evangelical Church  
Belfast, Ireland.

"We, the members of the Reformed Church of Japan wish to congratulate the Christian Reformed Church upon the commemoration of its Centennial Anniversary.

"The Rev. Mamoru Tamaki of the Reformed Church of Japan is at present studying at Westminster Seminary, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Mr. Tamaki has been asked to attend the Centennial Celebration as the official representative of the Reformed Church of Japan. We commend this our brother to your fellowship in Christ.

"We pray that God will richly bless this Centennial commemoration of your Church."

REV. KIYOSHI MIZUGAKI,  
Stated Clerk,  
Reformed Church of Japan.

"Because of circumstances beyond my control, I have been unable to come to your Centennial celebration as the representative of our Associate Reformed Presbyterian General Synod. I deeply regret my inability to be there to bring the greetings of our Synod. We do want you to know, however, that, as a Synod, we rejoice with you in this happy occasion. May God's richest blessings rest upon you, and may this be but the beginning of your growth in service and influence."

R. T. NELSON, Moderator,  
General Synod of the  
Associated Reformed Presbyterian Church,  
Lake Wales, Florida.

"Het is mij een zeer groote vreugde onze gevoelens jegens Uw Kerken te mogen vertolken. Wij verblijden ons ten zeerste over de goede hand van onze God over U gedurende deze eeuw. Bovenal verblijden wij ons, dat dit feit niet alleen een reden tot vreugde is in de Vereenigde Staten en Canada maar tevens ook in Argentinië en Brazilië. Daar blijkt reeds al uit hoe uitgebreid Uw arbeid is geweest tot zegen van anderen.

"Onze kerken voelen zich aan U verbonden en veel gelovigen zeggen U op dit ogenblik van blijdschap: hebt dank. En ik geloof, dat deze twee woorden 'hebt dank' onze mooiste gelukwens tot U inhoudt.

"Namens de Classis Buenos Aires, de Uwe in Christus."

J. L. VANDER VELDE,  
La Iglesia Reformada de la Argentina  
(The Reformed Church of Argentina).

"Brethren: Your 'House of Mercy,' Bethesda Sanatorium, takes this opportunity to felicitate the Christian Reformed Church of America in this centennial year of its formation.

"We certainly recognize that it is God who worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Yet it pleases Him to carry out His good pleasure through His church and by human instruments. He has richly blessed and prospered the denomination to be a blessing also in homes, schools, missions, reaching into the far corners of the earth. We at Bethesda feel especially the rich blessing of mercy bestowed on the church, in that her leaders and all her constituents support the cause of our mentally ill. We gratefully acknowledge and appreciate this ministry of mercy on the part of the Christian Reformed Church. Inasmuch as ye have done this unto these the least of my brethren, ye have done this unto me, says our Savior.

"May our churches ever grow in the consciousness of this our calling to help in this great cause. We beseech your continued prayers and support. God bless you abundantly in the years ahead.

"In continued service for Christ's sake."

REV. LEONARD VERMEER,  
Associate Pastor  
in charge of public relations,  
Bethesda Sanatorium, Denver, Colorado.

"Heartiest congratulations on this the Centennial Celebration of the Christian Reformed Church. Through these 100 years your support of the Bible cause has been a highly significant one. We are especially grateful for your help in the translation of the Navaho New Testament. May God richly bless each of you in the challenging days ahead as you continue in your Christian witness in America and throughout the world."

ROY I. MADSEN,  
Secretary, Church Relations,  
American Bible Society,  
New York, N. Y.

"We, the faculty of Korea Theological Seminary, congratulate with all our heart the Christian Reformed Church on the occasion of its one-hundredth anniversary."

THE FACULTY OF THE  
KOREA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,  
Pusan, Korea.

"Dear Brethren in Christ: Your church has done much for us in these formative and trying years. (Our own church celebrated its 10th anniversary last September.) In a day of cults and a multitude of religious hobbies the clear Reformed testimony of your church has confirmed and strengthened our faith, and encouraged us to concentrate on essential Christianity.

"Your generous gifts have helped to rebuild churches destroyed by war, and to erect modest places of worship where the war stricken people were too weak to build for themselves. Your gifts have helped to keep alive evangelists and their families as they ministered to flocks scattered through this devastated country. Your bales of warm relief clothing, and supplies of milk have tempered the wind and given new vitality to many a widow, orphan and poor family. . . .

"Visits from your representatives have been an inspiration to us and helped us to better evaluate our own work.

"It would be hard to evaluate how much the strength and present size of our denomination, with its approximately 550 churches, is due to the gifts and encouragement of your church. Truly this is one of the fruits of your 100 years of existence, and we thank God for you.

"May God bless you as you go forward and may we together with you be fit vessels through which may be shown the 'manifold wisdom of God,' 'unto the praise of the glory of His Grace.'"

SONHYUK PARK, Stated Clerk,  
The Korean Presbyterian Church,  
Pusan, Korea.

"The Free Magyar Reformed Church in America extends its heartiest greetings to the leaders and members of the Christian Reformed Church with which we feel ourselves same in the faith and in our Calvinist doctrines and traditions. May Almighty God bless you and godly works. Our Church will be represented at your meeting by Reverend Aladar Kompathy."

ARCH DEAN ZOLTAN BEKY,  
Trenton, New Jersey.

"Esteemed Brethren: We are happy to bring you fraternal greetings both from the Synod of the Bible Presbyterian Church and from the theological faculty of Covenant College and Seminary, which was recently established in St. Louis and is the official college and seminary of that denomination. We share the same convictions with you as to the great truths of the Bible and the Reformed Faith, and we seek for a closer

fellowship with those of like mind with regard to the great basic truths of the Lord's Word. . . .

"May I repeat that we stand with you in the great doctrines of the Reformed Faith. I recently became a member of the Session—corresponding to your consistories—of the First Bible Presbyterian Church of St. Louis, Missouri, where we have found a number of Christian Reformed families. You may be interested to hear that in the absence of a Christian Reformed Church in that city our Christian Reformed families have found themselves very much at home in the Bible Presbyterian Church and have found the preaching there truly Reformed.

"I believe our greatest enemies these days are worldliness and various forms of unbelief which are creeping into the churches and schools of our land—not simply Modernism and the Higher Criticism, but Neo-Orthodoxy and other shades of departure from the faith which so often affect our young people in various subtle ways.

"Again we congratulate you and wish God's choicest blessings upon your ministry. May you maintain a strong witness for the Truth, that your people may grow in the faith and your Church may be used increasingly to His glory."

DR. PETER STAM, JR.  
Dean, Covenant College and Theological  
Seminary,  
St. Louis, Missouri,  
Delegate from the Bible Presbyterian  
Church.

*Synod Received This Telegram from the  
President of the United States:*

Rev. John Kromminga  
Chairman Christian Reformed Church Centennial  
Grand Rapids, Michigan

To the members and friends of the Christian Reformed Church, joined in the Centennial Anniversary of their establishment in America, I send greetings.

In your emphasis on the daily work of faithful citizens you have been a strong influence for good in the community life about you. As you encourage participation in civic affairs, you bring the teachings of your church into contact with life everywhere, and promote the highest loyalty to God and neighbor.

Congratulations and best wishes as you enter your second century of devoted services in this country.

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER  
President of the United States.

## Dates of Memorable Events in the History of the Christian Reformed Church

1857

- MARCH 19—First organizational step toward new denomination: members of the Second Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, organize independent church (now First Church, Grand Rapids).
- APRIL 8—Second organizational step toward new denomination: secession of Graafschap Church and Polkton Church from Classis Holland of Reformed Church. Also two ministers resign as ministers of Classis.
- APRIL 17—Third organizational step toward new denomination: members of the Vriesland Reformed Church form independent church.
- APRIL 29—Final organizational step of new denomination: meeting of Graafschap, Grand Rapids, Noordeloos, Polkton, and Vriesland churches to form a Classis. **THIS IS THE BIRTH-DATE OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH.**

1859

- FEBRUARY 2—First official name chosen for denomination: "Hollandsche Gereformeerde Kerk."

1861

- FEBRUARY 6—Second official name chosen for denomination: "Ware Hollandsche Gereformeerde Kerk."

1862

- APRIL 1—First church organized within the denomination (First Zeeland, Michigan).

1865

- OCTOBER 4—First meeting of the "General Assembly" (since 1880 called Synod) of the denomination, held at Graafschap, Michigan.

1866

- MAY 11—First church organized in New Jersey (First Paterson).
- AUGUST 9—First church organized in Iowa (First Pella).
- AUGUST 22—First German-speaking church organized (Ridott, Illinois).
- OCTOBER 16—First permanent church organized in Wisconsin (Oostburg, formerly Gibbsville).

1867

- JULY 4—First church organized in Ohio (Cincinnati).

1868

- FEBRUARY 14—First publication of *De Wachter*.
- OCTOBER 7—Second Classis of denomination organized (Illinois). This body was dissolved in 1941 when the two Chicago Classes (North and South) were organized.

1869

- APRIL 5—First church organized in Indiana (Lafayette).

1871

- JUNE 16—First English worship service within the denomination, in the Central Avenue Church, Holland, Michigan; conducted by a minister of the True Protestant Dutch Reformed Church.

1876

- MARCH 15—Origin of Calvin Theological Seminary: Rev. G. E. Boer installed as Docent.
- SEPTEMBER 13—First church organized in New York (West Sayville, formerly Sayville).

1877

- JUNE 7—Federal union effected with True Protestant Dutch Reformed Church (in the eastern part of the U.S.).

1878

- NOVEMBER 14—Classis Hudson organized.

1879

- JULY 2—Beginning of denominational home missions. First itinerant minister sent to Clam Union (now Vogel Center), Michigan.

1880

- JUNE 9—First Synod whose Acts were published.
- JUNE 11—Third official name chosen for denomination: "Hollandsche Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk" (Holland Christian Reformed Church).
- NOVEMBER 18—First church organized in Kansas (Dispatch, formerly Rotterdam).

1881

- MARCH 1—First denominational Yearbook published.

- 1882  
JULY 19—Classis Holland organized.
- 1883  
MAY 3—First church organized in South Dakota (New Holland).
- 1886  
APRIL 29—First church organized in Minnesota (Prinsburg).  
AUGUST 22—Classis Muskegon organized.  
SEPTEMBER 21—First church in Illinois reorganized (First South Holland). This church was organized early in 1865 at Lage Prairie; but difficulties led to resignation of the pastor and the majority of the congregation in 1886.
- 1887  
FEBRUARY 23—First English-speaking church organized: Lagrave Avenue, Grand Rapids (formerly Fourth Church).  
APRIL 27—First church organized in North Dakota (Hull).
- 1889  
OCTOBER 23—First missionary in denomination installed. His work, begun among the Sioux Indians, on Rosebud Agency, Dakota, abandoned within a year.
- 1890  
JUNE 10—Merger of the "Hollandsche Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk" with the "True Protestant Dutch Reformed Church." As a result, the fourth official name of the denomination becomes: "The Christian Reformed Church."  
OCTOBER 21—Classis Hackensack organized; formerly "True Protestant Dutch Reformed Church."
- 1891  
APRIL 6—100th church organized: Parkersburg, Iowa.
- 1892  
SEPTEMBER 7—Theological School building, on Madison and Franklin, Grand Rapids, dedicated.
- 1896  
OCTOBER 10—Beginning of denominational missions among Navajo Indians in New Mexico.  
OCTOBER 20—First church organized in Massachusetts (Whitinsville).
- 1897  
OCTOBER 9—Beginning of denominational missions among Zuni Indians in Zuni, New Mexico.
- 1898  
AUGUST 16—Classis Grand Rapids East organized.  
AUGUST 16—Classis Grand Rapids West organized.
- 1900  
JULY 11—First permanent church organized in Washington (First Lynden).
- SEPTEMBER 5—Preparatory school at Theological School opened.
- 1902  
JUNE 27—Office of Stated Clerk of the Christian Reformed Church created.
- 1903  
JUNE 22—First church organized in Montana (Manhattan).  
OCTOBER 1—First worship service at Rehoboth Indian Mission.
- 1904  
APRIL 28—First permanent church organized in Colorado (Alamosa).  
SEPTEMBER 16—Classis Pella organized (for several years called Classis Iowa).
- 1905  
NOVEMBER 16—First church organized in Alberta and in Canada (Nijverdal). This church reorganized in 1911 into two separate churches, Granum and Monarch (now called Nobleford).
- 1906  
AUGUST 15—First permanent church organized in New Mexico (Rehoboth). This church organized at Fort Defiance in 1899 and removed to Rehoboth in 1906.  
SEPTEMBER 9—John Calvin Junior College opened (four years high school and two years college).
- 1908  
MAY 20—Majority of churches of Classis Hackensack secede from denomination.  
JUNE 24—Conclusions of Utrecht adopted by Synod of Muskegon.  
AUGUST 11—Classis Zeeland organized.
- 1910  
JUNE 17—Christian Psychopathic Hospital established at Cutlerville, Michigan. Name changed to Pine Rest in 1952.  
SEPTEMBER 27—Rehoboth Mission Hospital dedicated.  
OCTOBER 12—Classis Pacific organized.
- 1911  
MAY 11—First church organized in California (First Redlands).  
NOVEMBER 11—First church organized in Manitoba (Winnipeg).
- 1912  
SEPTEMBER 11—200th church organized (Zenith, North Dakota). Dissolved in 1921.  
SEPTEMBER 25—Classis Sioux Center organized.
- 1915  
FEBRUARY 25—First issue of The Banner as a denominational publication.

- 1916  
OCTOBER 4—Grundy College, Grundy Center, Iowa, opened. Closed in the 1930's.
- 1917  
AUGUST 17—Christian Sanitarium (Goffle Hill) opened at Wyckoff, New Jersey.  
SEPTEMBER 4—Main building at Calvin College opened.
- 1918  
JUNE 26—Denomination affiliates with Federal Council of Christian Churches.  
SEPTEMBER 8—First Christian High School opened (Chicago).
- 1919  
JANUARY 2—First denominational printing plant opened at 214 Pearl Street, Grand Rapids, Michigan.  
SEPTEMBER 4—First President of Calvin College installed.  
SEPTEMBER 18—American Federation of Reformed Young Men's Societies organized.
- 1920  
SEPTEMBER 1—National Union of Christian Schools established at Chicago. The eight original members were schools in Chicago, Iowa, and Wisconsin.  
SEPTEMBER 8—Calvin College becomes full-fledged college. Preparatory department reorganized as Grand Rapids Christian High School.  
SEPTEMBER 20—Majority of members of First Church, Muskegon, secede and organize Berean Reformed Church, as result of Synod's action 1918 rejecting the Dispensationalist views of the pastor.  
SEPTEMBER 27—First Secretary for Foreign and Indian Missions installed.
- 1922  
NOVEMBER 17—Beginning of denominational mission work in China, at Jukao, Kiangsu.
- 1923  
MAY 1—Second publication plant opened at 52 Market Street, Grand Rapids, Michigan.
- 1924  
MAY 23—Beginning of medical mission work in China at Jukao.  
JULY 1—Denomination cancels membership in Federal Council of Christian Churches.  
AUGUST 6—Classis California organized.  
SEPTEMBER 4—Calvin College Dormitory opened.  
SEPTEMBER 17—Classis Wisconsin organized.  
DECEMBER 12—Suspension of pastor of Eastern Avenue Church, Grand Rapids, leading to organization of the Protestant Reformed Church.
- 1925  
JANUARY 24—Pastor of First Church, Kalamazoo, suspended from office, leading to organization of First Protestant Christian Reformed Church (Common grace controversy). The congregation returned to denominational fellowship in 1946.
- 1926  
JULY 19—First church organized in Ontario (Chatham).  
OCTOBER 21—First church organized in British Columbia (First Vancouver).
- 1927  
APRIL 5—First permanent church organized in Idaho (Grangeville).
- 1928  
MARCH 8—Calvin College Library opened.  
MARCH 13—American Federation of Reformed Men's Societies organized.
- 1930  
OCTOBER 7—Beginning of denominational work in Argentina.  
OCTOBER 29—Present Calvin Seminary Building dedicated.
- 1931  
APRIL 27—Christian Labor Association organized.  
SEPTEMBER 9—First President of Calvin Seminary installed.
- 1932  
MAY 6—American Federation of Reformed Young Women's Societies organized.
- 1935  
JANUARY 9—Beginning of denominational work in Brazil.  
JANUARY 15—Psalter Hymnal issued as official denominational praise book.
- 1936  
NOVEMBER 17—First church organized in North Carolina (Terra Ceia).
- 1937  
JANUARY 1—Publication House adds Sunday school papers to work of denominational printing plant.  
DECEMBER 23—Third publication plant, 47 Jefferson Avenue, Grand Rapids, dedicated.
- 1938  
JANUARY 12—Classis Grand Rapids South organized.  
JANUARY 12—Classis Kalamazoo organized.
- 1939  
DECEMBER 17—First denominational broadcast, over a Chicago station.
- 1940  
JANUARY 1—Beginning of denominational missions in Nigeria.

JANUARY 3—Opening of Reformed Bible Institute in Grand Rapids.

SEPTEMBER 6—300th church organized (Saginaw, Michigan).

1941

OCTOBER 16—Classis Chicago North organized.

OCTOBER 16—Classis Chicago South organized.

1942

JULY 16—Missionaries forced to leave China. Some interned.

1943

JUNE 18—Denomination affiliates with National Association of Evangelicals.

NOVEMBER 14—First church organized in Washington, D.C.

1944

SEPTEMBER 1—First full-time denominational editor begins his work.

NOVEMBER 17—Bethany Christian Home in Grand Rapids opened.

1946

APRIL 3—First permanent church organized in Arizona (Phoenix).

AUGUST 14—First Reformed Ecumenical Synod convened in Grand Rapids.

SEPTEMBER 1—First denominational radio minister begins his labors.

1947

AUGUST 1—First full-time Secretary of Home Missions begins his work.

DECEMBER 7—First denominational broadcast over Mutual Broadcasting System.

1949

MARCH 4—Beginning of denominational work in Ceylon.

1950

JANUARY 1—Introduction of the Family Altar by the Back to God Hour.

FEBRUARY 6—Calvin Science building dedicated.

FEBRUARY 7—Official termination of our mission work in China.

JUNE 22—Annexation of Tiv field to our Nigerian Mission.

1951

MARCH 25—Beginning of denominational mission work in Japan.

JUNE 25—Denomination cancels membership in the National Association of Evangelicals.

NOVEMBER 1—Beginning of denominational mission work in South India. The work terminated in 1954.

NOVEMBER 27—Classis Alberta organized.

1952

MAY 30—400th church organized (Mount Hamilton, Ontario).

AUGUST 20—Beginning of evangelization among Negroes in Harlem, New York City.

AUGUST 28—Classis Minnesota North organized.

AUGUST 28—Classis Minnesota South organized.

OCTOBER 26—First permanent church organized in Saskatchewan (Saskatoon).

DECEMBER 3—Classis Chatham organized.

DECEMBER 3—Classis Eastern Ontario organized.

DECEMBER 3—Classis Hamilton organized.

1953

FEBRUARY 27—Calvin Commons opened.

1954

JANUARY 31—First denominational telecast on San Diego, California, and Dallas, Texas, stations.

FEBRUARY 7—First church organized in province of Quebec (Montreal).

FEBRUARY 7—First church organized in Nova Scotia (Truro, formerly Belmont).

1955

MAY 25—First church organized in Florida (Miami).

JULY 6—Classis Cadillac organized.

JULY 10—First church organized on Prince Edward Island.

AUGUST 21—Young Calvinist Federation of North America organized. Replaces old Federations of Reformed Young Men's and Reformed Young Women's Societies.

SEPTEMBER 1—Dedication of Dordt Junior College, Sioux Center, Iowa.

OCTOBER 19—Classis Rocky Mountain organized.

1956

JUNE 14—New denominational office building and fourth printing plant dedicated.

JUNE 14—Synod authorizes purchase of 166-acre Knollcrest Estate by Calvin College for future campus use.

JUNE 18—Synod establishes office of full-time Stated Clerk.

1957

MARCH 3—MAY 26—Centennial of the Christian Reformed Church is celebrated with special thirteen-week observance period of events.

APRIL 7—Official Centennial Sunday observed in all churches of the denomination. Centennial Thankoffering brings in more than \$300,000 for new Calvin Seminary building as Centennial Memorial.

JUNE 11—Centennial Synod marks international recognition of a century of the Christian Reformed Church in the new world.

JUNE 21—Synod authorizes expansion of Calvin College and Seminary to new Knollcrest campus. Centennial Memorial Seminary, dormitories and power plant are approved as projects for new site.

## Summary of the Growth of the Christian Reformed Church

### FAMILIES, COMMICANT MEMBERS AND TOTAL MEMBERS

Year .....	1857	1882	1907	1932	1957
Families .....	130*	2,976	13,344	23,376	47,991
Commicant Members...	350*	4,439	25,175	56,006	113,231
Total Members .....	600*	14,787	66,879	113,353	211,454

\*Estimate

### MINISTERS AND CONGREGATIONS

Year .....	1857	1882	1907	1932	1957
Ministers .....	1*	23*	116*	249*	392*
Congregations .....	4	48	175	271	495

\*Active ministers

## The Roll of the Churches by Classes

### CLASSIS ALBERTA NORTH

Barrhead-Westlock  
Edmonton I  
Edmonton II  
Edmonton III  
Edmonton, Maranatha  
(Beverly)  
Edmonton, Jasper Place  
Edson  
Houston, B.C.  
Lacombe I  
Lacombe, Bethel  
La Glace  
Neerlandia  
Peers  
Red Deer  
Rocky Mountain House  
Smithers, B.C.  
Telkwa, B.C.  
Terrace, B.C.

### CLASSIS ALBERTA SOUTH

Bellevue  
Bowness-Montgomery  
Brooks  
Burdett  
Calgary I  
Calgary II  
Granum  
High River  
Iron Springs  
Lethbridge  
Medicine Hat  
Nobleford  
Regina, Sask.  
Saskatoon, Sask.  
Taber  
Vauxhall

### CLASSIS CADILLAC

Aetna  
Arlene  
Atwood  
Cadillac  
Ellsworth  
Falmouth, Prosper  
Highland

Lucas  
McBain  
McBain, Calvin  
Rudyard  
Vogel Center

### CLASSIS CALIFORNIA

Alameda  
Anaheim  
Arcadia  
Artesia I  
Artesia, Trinity  
Bellflower I  
Bellflower, Bethany  
Bellflower III  
Bellflower, Rehoboth  
Escalon  
Escondido  
Hanford  
Lakewood  
Los Angeles  
Modesto  
Ontario  
Redlands I  
Redlands II  
Ripon I  
Ripon, Immanuel  
San Diego  
San Jose  
Sun Valley, Bethel

### CLASSIS CHATHAM

Aylmer  
Blenheim  
Chatham  
Clinton  
Dresden  
Essex  
Exeter  
Forest  
Ingersoll  
Leamington  
London  
Lucknow  
Sarnia I  
Sarnia II  
Strathroy  
St. Thomas

Wallaceburg  
Woodstock  
Wyoming

### CLASSIS CHICAGO NORTH

Bellwood  
Berwyn, Ebenezer  
Chicago, Archer Ave.  
Chicago, Auburn Park  
Chicago, Englewood I  
Chicago, Englewood II  
Cicero I  
Cicero, Warren Park  
Des Plaines  
Fulton  
Morrison  
Oak Lawn  
Oak Park  
Ridott  
Western Springs  
Wheaton

### CLASSIS CHICAGO SOUTH

Chicago, Roseland I  
Chicago, Roseland II  
Chicago, Roseland III  
Chicago, Roseland IV  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
De Motte, Ind.  
Evergreen Park  
Evergreen Park, Park Lane  
Highland I, Ind.  
Highland II, Ind.  
Lafayette, Ind.  
Lansing I  
Lansing, Oak Glen  
Momence  
Munster, Ind.  
Palos Heights  
South Holland I  
South Holland, Bethany  
South Holland, Cottage Grove

### CLASSIS EASTERN ONTARIO

Athens  
Belleville  
Bloomfield

Bowmanville  
 Brockville, Bethel  
 Campbellford  
 Charlottetown, P.E.I.  
 Cobourg  
 Cornwall  
 Kingston  
 Lindsay  
 Montreal, Que.  
 Oshawa  
 Ottawa  
 Pembroke  
 Peterborough  
 Port William, N.S.  
 Renfrew  
 Trenton  
 Truro, N.S.  
 Williamsburg

CLASSIS  
 GRAND RAPIDS EAST

Ada  
 Ann Arbor  
 Cascade  
 Dearborn  
 Detroit  
 Dutton  
 East Paris  
 Flint  
 G.R. Boston Square  
 G.R. Calvin  
 G.R. Eastern Ave.  
 G.R. First  
 G.R. Fuller Ave.  
 G.R. Mayfair  
 G.R. Millbrook  
 G.R. Neland Ave.  
 G.R. Oakdale Park  
 G.R. Plymouth Heights  
 G. R. Seymour  
 G.R. Sherman St.  
 Imlay City  
 Lansing  
 Portland  
 Saginaw, Community

CLASSIS  
 GRAND RAPIDS SOUTH

Bauer  
 Byron Center I  
 Byron Center II  
 Cutlerville  
 Cutlerville East  
 Dorr  
 Grandville, Hope  
 Grandville, South  
 G.R. Alger Park  
 G.R. Bethel  
 G.R. Beverly  
 G.R. Burton Heights

G.R. Franklin St.  
 G.R. Godwin Heights  
 G.R. Grandville Ave.  
 G.R. Immanuel  
 G.R. Kelloggsville  
 G.R. Lagrave Ave.  
 G.R. Lee St.  
 G.R. 36th St.  
 G.R. Wyoming Park  
 Jenison I  
 Jenison, Trinity  
 Jenison, 12th Ave.  
 Moline

CLASSIS  
 GRAND RAPIDS WEST

Coopersville  
 Eastmanville  
 G.R. Alpine Ave.  
 G.R. Broadway  
 G.R. Coldbrook  
 G.R. Creston  
 G.R. E. Leonard St.  
 G.R. Highland Hills  
 G.R. Riverside  
 G.R. 12th St.  
 G.R. W. Leonard St.  
 Grant  
 Lamont  
 Plainfield  
 Walker

CLASSIS HACKENSACK

Bradenton, Fla.  
 Englewood, N.J.  
 Lake Worth, Fla.  
 Lodi, N.J.  
 Miami, Fla.  
 Monsey, N.Y.  
 Newton, N.J.  
 Passaic, N.J., Northside  
 Passaic, N.J., Prospect St.  
 Passaic, N.J., Summer St.  
 Paterson, N.J., Bethel  
 Paterson, N.J., Madison Ave.  
 Paterson III, N.J.  
 Preakness, N.J.  
 Philadelphia, Pa., Trinity  
 Chapel  
 Sussex, N.J.  
 Terra Ceia, N.C.  
 Wanamassa, N.J.  
 West Sayville, N.Y.

CLASSIS HAMILTON

Brantford  
 Burlington  
 Drayton  
 Fruitland

Greensville, Calvin  
 Guelph  
 Hamilton  
 Jarvis  
 Kitchener  
 Listowel  
 Mount Hamilton  
 Niagara Falls  
 St. Catharines  
 Simcoe  
 Stratford  
 Wellandport  
 York

CLASSIS HOLLAND

East Saugatuck  
 Graafschap  
 Hamilton  
 Harderwyk  
 Holland, Bethany  
 Holland, Calvin  
 Holland, Central Ave.  
 Holland, Faith  
 Holland, 14th St.  
 Holland Heights  
 Holland, Maple Ave.  
 Holland, Montello Park  
 Holland, Ninth St.  
 Holland, Park  
 Holland, Prospect Park  
 Holland, 16th St.  
 Niekerk  
 Noordeloos  
 Pine Creek  
 South Olive

CLASSIS HUDSON

East Palmyra, N.Y.  
 Goshen, N.Y.  
 Hoboken, N.J.  
 Irving Park, N.J.  
 Midland Park, N.J.  
 North Haledon, N.J.  
 Paterson I, N.J.  
 Paterson II, N.J.  
 Paterson IV, N.J.  
 Prospect Park, N.J.  
 Ridgewood, N.J.  
 Rochester, N.Y.  
 Washington, D.C.  
 Whitinsville, Mass.  
 Wyckoff, N.J., Calvin

CLASSIS KALAMAZOO

Battle Creek  
 Cleveland East  
 Cleveland West  
 Columbus, Olentangy  
 Comstock

Decatur  
 East Martin  
 Goshen, Ind.  
 Kalamazoo I  
 Kalamazoo II  
 Kalamazoo III  
 Kalamazoo, Grace  
 Kalamazoo, Knollwood  
 Kalamazoo, Milwood  
 Kalamazoo, Westwood  
 Parchment  
 Willard, Ohio

CLASSIS  
 MINNESOTA NORTH

Bejou  
 Brooten  
 Bunde  
 Clara City  
 Crookston  
 Emden  
 Emo, Ont.  
 Fort William, Ont.  
 Hancock  
 Minneapolis  
 Ogilvie  
 Pease  
 Prinsburg  
 Raymond  
 Willmar

CLASSIS  
 MINNESOTA SOUTH

Bemis, S. Dak  
 Brandon, Man.  
 Chandler  
 Edgerton I  
 Edgerton, Bethel  
 Estelline, S. Dak.  
 Holland, Minn.  
 Kenora, Ont.  
 Leota  
 Luverne  
 Mountain Lake  
 Pipestone  
 Portage la Prairie, Man.  
 Transcona, Man.  
 Tyler  
 Volga, S. Dak.  
 Winnipeg, Man.

CLASSIS MUSKEGON

Ferrysburg  
 Fruitport  
 Fremont I  
 Fremont II  
 Fremont, Trinity  
 Grand Haven I  
 Grand Haven II

Muskegon I  
 Muskegon, Allen Ave.  
 Muskegon, Bethany  
 Muskegon, Bluffton  
 Muskegon, East  
 Muskegon, Grace  
 Muskegon Heights  
 Muskegon, Hope  
 Muskegon, Immanuel  
 New Era  
 Reeman  
 Spring Lake  
 Sullivan

CLASSIS ORANGE CITY

Bigelow, Minn.  
 Hartley, Iowa  
 Hawarden  
 Hospers  
 Ireton  
 Le Mars  
 Middleburg  
 Ocheyedon  
 Orange City I  
 Orange City II  
 Sanborn  
 Sheldon  
 Sibley  
 Sioux City  
 Worthington, Minn.

CLASSIS OSTFRIESLAND

Ackley  
 Allison, Bethel  
 Austinville  
 Holland, Iowa  
 Hollandale, Minn.  
 Iowa Falls  
 Kanawha  
 Kanawha, Wright  
 Lincoln Center  
 Parkersburg  
 Wellsburg I  
 Wellsburg II  
 Woden

CLASSIS PACIFIC

Abbotsford, B.C.  
 Bozeman, Mont.  
 Courtenay-Campbell  
 River, B.C.  
 Chilliwack, B.C.  
 Conrad, Mont.  
 Duncan, B.C.  
 Everett, Wash.  
 Everson, Wash.  
 Grangeville, Idaho  
 Haney, B.C.  
 Ladner, B.C.

Langley, B.C.  
 Lynden I, Wash.  
 Lynden II, Wash.  
 Lynden III, Wash.  
 Lynden, Wash., Bethel  
 Manhattan, Mont.  
 Monroe, Wash.  
 Mt. Vernon, Wash.  
 New Westminster, B.C.  
 Oak Harbor, Wash.  
 Port Alberni, B.C.  
 Richmond, B.C.  
 Seattle I, Wash.  
 Seattle II, Wash.  
 Sumas, Wash.  
 Sunnyside, Wash.  
 Vancouver I, B.C.  
 Vancouver, Bethel, B.C.  
 Vernon-Kelowna, B.C.  
 Victoria, B.C.  
 Zillah, Wash.

CLASSIS PELLA

Cedar  
 Des Moines  
 Leighton  
 Newton  
 Oskaloosa I  
 Oskaloosa, Bethel  
 Otley  
 Pella I  
 Pella II  
 Pella, Calvary  
 Peoria  
 Prairie City  
 Sully  
 Tracy

CLASSIS  
 ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Alamosa, Colo.  
 Albuquerque, N. Mex.  
 Denver I, Colo.  
 Denver II, Colo.  
 Denver III, Colo.  
 Dispatch, Kan.  
 Gallup, N. Mex.  
 Luctor, Kan.  
 Phoenix, Ariz.  
 Rehoboth, N. Mex.  
 Salt Lake City, Utah  
 Tucson, Ariz.

CLASSIS SIOUX CENTER

Colton, S. Dak.  
 Corsica, S. Dak.  
 Doon  
 Harrison, S. Dak.  
 Hills, Minn.

Holland Center, S. Dak.  
Hull, Iowa  
Hull, N. Dak.  
Inwood  
Lebanon  
New Holland, S. Dak.  
Platte, S. Dak.  
Purewater, S. Dak.  
Rock Rapids  
Rock Valley I  
Rock Valley, Calvin  
Sioux Center I  
Sioux Center, Bethel  
Sioux Falls, S. Dak.

#### CLASSIS TORONTO

Acton  
Alliston  
Barrie  
Brampton  
Clarkson  
Cochrane  
Collingwood

Georgetown  
Holland Marsh  
New Liskeard  
Newmarket  
Orangeville  
Orillia  
Owen Sound  
Springdale  
Toronto I  
Toronto II  
Toronto, Annette

#### CLASSIS WISCONSIN

Alto  
Baldwin  
Birnamwood  
Delavan  
Kenosha  
Milwaukee  
Oostburg  
Racine  
Randolph I  
Randolph II

Sheboygan  
Vesper  
Waupun

#### CLASSIS ZEELAND

Allendale I  
Allendale II  
Beaverdam  
Borculo  
Drenthe  
Hudsonville I  
Hudsonville, Immanuel  
Hudsonville, Hillcrest  
Jamestown  
North Blendon  
Oakland  
Overisel  
Rusk  
Zeeland I  
Zeeland, North St.  
Zeeland III  
Zeeland, Bethel  
Zutphen

### SUMMARY OF CLASSICAL MEMBERSHIP

Classes	Church Families	Communi- cant Members	Total Members (Souls)	Congrega- tions	Ministers
Alberta North .....	1,232	2,781	6,271	18	10
Alberta South .....	626	1,513	3,337	16	7
Cadillac .....	666	1,600	3,093	12	11
California .....	2,107	4,857	9,453	22	19
Chatham .....	1,528	3,382	7,783	19	13
Chicago North .....	2,115	4,926	8,484	16	14
Chicago South .....	2,690	6,294	11,353	19	17
Eastern Ontario .....	1,270	2,934	6,614	21	11
Grand Rapids East .....	3,635	8,950	15,222	24	21
Grand Rapids South .....	4,208	9,904	17,790	25	22
Grand Rapids West .....	1,951	4,552	7,803	15	14
Hackensack .....	1,255	3,093	5,100	19	13
Hamilton .....	1,500	3,301	7,574	15	13
Holland .....	2,700	6,580	11,162	20	18
Hudson .....	1,769	4,253	7,169	15	11
Kalamazoo .....	1,655	3,948	7,089	16	15
Minnesota North .....	1,061	2,460	4,916	15	13
Minnesota South .....	1,057	2,475	5,014	17	13
Muskegon .....	1,975	4,752	8,160	20	14
Orange City .....	1,262	3,048	5,620	15	15
Ostfriesland .....	769	1,847	3,151	13	12
Pacific .....	2,447	5,763	11,819	30	23
Pella .....	1,269	3,008	5,594	14	11
Rocky Mt. ....	833	1,981	3,479	11	7
Sioux Center .....	1,712	3,918	7,438	19	17
Toronto .....	1,224	2,794	5,985	18	11
Wisconsin .....	1,149	2,807	4,953	13	11
Zeeland .....	2,326	5,510	10,028	18	16
Totals .....	47,991	113,231	211,454	495	392

## List of Churches by Provinces and States

### CANADA

#### ALBERTA

Barrhead-Westlock  
Bellevue  
Bowness-  
Montgomery  
Brooks  
Burdett  
Calgary (2)  
Edmonton (5)  
Edson  
Granum  
High River  
Iron Springs  
Lacombe (2)  
La Glace  
Lethbridge  
Medicine Hat  
Neerlandia  
Nobleford  
Peers  
Red Deer  
Rocky Mountain  
House  
Taber  
Vauxhall

#### BRITISH COLUMBIA

Abbotsford  
Chilliwack  
Courtney-Camp-  
bell River  
Duncan  
Haney  
Houston  
Ladner  
Langley  
New Westminster  
Port Alberni  
Prince George  
Richmond  
Smithers  
Telkwa  
Terrace  
Vancouver (2)  
Vernon-Kelowna  
Victoria

#### MANITOBA

Brandon  
Portage la Prairie  
Transcona  
Winnipeg

#### NOVA SCOTIA

Port William  
Truro

#### ONTARIO

Acton  
Alliston  
Athens  
Atitokan  
Aylmer  
Barrie  
Bellville  
Blenheim  
Bloomfield  
Bowmanville  
Brampton  
Brantford  
Brockville  
Burlington  
Campbellford  
Chatham  
Clarkson  
Clinton  
Cobourg  
Cochrane  
Collingwood  
Cornwall  
Drayton  
Dresden  
Emo  
Essex  
Exeter  
Forest  
Fort William  
Fruitland  
Georgetown  
Greensville  
Guelph  
Hamilton  
Holland Marsh  
Ingersoll  
Jarvis  
Kemptonville  
Kenora  
Kingston  
Kitchener  
Leamington  
Lindsay  
Listowel  
London  
Lucknow  
Mount Hamilton  
New Liskeard

#### NEW MARKET

Niagara Falls-  
Stamford  
Orangeville  
Orillia  
Oshawa  
Ottawa  
Owen Sound  
Pembroke  
Peterborough  
Renfrew  
Sarnia (2)  
Springdale  
St. Catharines  
St. Thomas  
Simcoe  
Stratford  
Strathroy  
Toronto (3)  
Trenton  
Wallaceburg  
Wellandport  
Williamsburg  
Woodstock  
Wyoming  
York

#### PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Charlottetown

#### QUEBEC

Montreal

#### SASKATCHEWAN

Regina  
Saskatoon

#### UNITED STATES

Alaska (2)

#### ARIZONA

Phoenix  
Tucson

#### CALIFORNIA

Alameda  
Anaheim  
Arcadia  
Artesia (2)  
Bellflower (4)  
Escalon  
Escondido  
Hanford  
Lakewood

#### LOS ANGELES

Modesto  
Ontario  
Redlands (2)  
Ripon (2)  
San Diego  
San Jose  
Sun Valley

#### COLORADO

Alamosa  
Denver (3)

#### DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Washington

#### FLORIDA

Bradenton  
Fort Lauderdale  
Lake Worth  
Miami

#### IDAHO

Grangeville

#### ILLINOIS

Bellwood  
Berwyn  
Chicago (8)  
Cicero (2)  
Des Plaines  
Evergreen Park (2)  
Fulton  
Lansing (2)  
Mokenca  
Morrison  
Oak Lawn  
Oak Park  
Palos Heights  
Ridott  
South Holland (3)  
Urbana-  
Champaign  
Western Springs  
Wheaton

#### INDIANA

De Motte  
Goshen  
Highland (2)  
Lafayette  
Munster

#### IOWA

Ackley

Allison	Cascade	Walker	Rochester
Austinville	Comstock	Zeeland (4)	West Sayville
Cedar	Coopersville	Zutphen	NORTH CAROLINA
Des Moines	Cutlerville (2)		Terra Ceia
Doon	Dearborn	MINNESOTA	NORTH DAKOTA
Hartley	Decatur	Bejou	Hull
Hawarden	Detroit	Bigelow	OHIO
Holland	Dorr	Brooten	Cincinnati
Hospers	Drenthe	Bunde	Cleveland (2)
Hull	Dutton	Chandler	Columbus
Inwood	Eastmanville	Clara City	Maple Heights
Iowa Falls	East Martin	Crookston	Willard
Ireton	East Paris	Edgerton (2)	OKLAHOMA
Kanawha (2)	East Saugatuck	Emden	Oklahoma City
Lebanon	Ellsworth	Hancock	PENNSYLVANIA
Leighton	Falmouth	Hills	Philadelphia
Le Mars	(Prosper)	Holland	SOUTH DAKOTA
Lincoln Center	Ferrysburg	Hollandale	Bemis
Middleburg	Flint	Leota	Colton
Newton	Fremont (3)	Luverne	Corsica
Ocheyedan	Fruitport	Minneapolis	Estelline
Orange City (2)	Graafschap	Mountain Lake	Harrison
Oskaloosa (2)	Grand Haven (2)	Ogilvie	Holland Center
Otley	Grand	Pease	New Holland
Parkersburg	Rapids (34)	Pipestone	Platte
Pella (3)	Grandville (2)	Prinsburg	Purewater
Peoria	Grant	Raymond	Sioux Falls
Prairie City	Hamilton	Tyler	Volga
Rock Rapids	Harderwyk	Willmar	UTAH
Rock Valley (2)	Highland	Worthington	Salt Lake City
Sanborn	Holland (12)	MONTANA	WASHINGTON
Sheldon	Hudsonville (3)	Bozeman	Everett
Sibley	Imlay City	Conrad	Everson
Sioux Center (2)	Jamestown	Manhattan	Lynden (4)
Sioux City	Jenison (3)	NEW JERSEY	Monroe
Sully	Kalamazoo (7)	Englewood	Mount Vernon
Tracy	Kelloggsville	Franklin Lakes	Oak Harbor
Wellsburg (2)	Lamont	Hoboken	Seattle (2)
Woden	Lansing	Irving Park	Spokane
KANSAS	Lucas	Lodi	Sumas
Dispatch	McBain (2)	Midland Park	Sunnyside
Luctor	Moline	Newton	Zillah
MASSACHUSETTS	Muskegon (9)	North Haledon	WISCONSIN
Framingham	New Era	Passaic (3)	Alto
Whitinsville	Niekerk	Paterson (7)	Baldwin
MICHIGAN	Noordeloos	Preakness	Birnamwood
Ada	North Blendon	Ridgewood	Delavan
Aetna	Oakland	Sussex	Kenosha
Allendale (2)	Overisel	Wanamassa	Madison
Ann Arbor (2)	Parchment	Wyckoff	Milwaukee
Arlene	Pine Creek	NEW MEXICO	Oostburg
Atwood	Plainfield	Albuquerque	Racine
Battle Creek	Portland	Gallup	Randolph (2)
Bauer	Reeman	Rehoboth	Sheboygan
Beaverdam	Rudyard	NEW YORK	Vesper
Borculo	Rusk	East Palmyra	Waupun
Byron Center (2)	Saginaw	Goshen	
Cadillac	South Olive	Monsey	
	Spring Lake		
	Sullivan		
	Vogel Center		

